High Court affirms award of additional attorney fees. PAGE 2
Fire breaks out at abandoned structure in As Matuis. PAGE 5

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXII, Issue No. 238

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Possible undersea eruption provokes alert level change

Although signals seem to indicate that the possible underwater eruption near Uracas in the Northern Islands may be diminished now, some signs are still being seen, prompting the CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management yesterday to raise the Aviation Color Code in the area from "Unassigned" to "Yellow" and the alert level from "Unassigned" to "Advisory."

An HSEM news release yesterday said that geophysical data from

See POSSIBLE on Page 4

Over $200K default judgment vs IP OK'd

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the NMI has granted USA Fanter Corp. Ltd.'s request for default judgment in the amount of over $200,000 against Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC in its lawsuit alleging breach of contract against the casino investor.

During a motion hearing yesterday,

See OVER on Page 4

CHRISTMAS IN THE MARIANAS KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

With the Christmas holiday just around the corner, the Marianas Visitors Authority has been hard at work this past week, erecting dozens of sculptures and a massive Christmas tree that will soon light up the Garapan Fishing Base as part of MVA's annual Christmas in the Marianas event.

IN SUBPOENA RELATED TO BOOST PROGRAM

House committees set joint meeting, include 'contempt' in their agenda

» Chief of staff William Castro agrees to cooperate, seeks extension

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Babauta

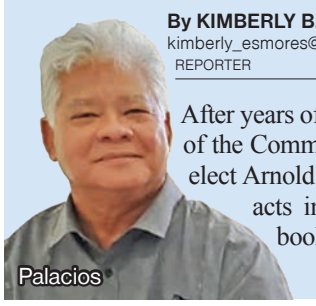
Manglona

Two House of Representatives committees scheduled yesterday a joint meeting related to their subpoena to compel some entities and persons to produce and testify related to the Torres administration's Building Optimism, Opportunities, and Stability Together, and one of the meeting's agenda is "contempt."

Committee on Ways and Means chair Rep. Don-

See HOUSE on Page 4

AD administration to open CNMI finance books as 1st act in office



Palacios

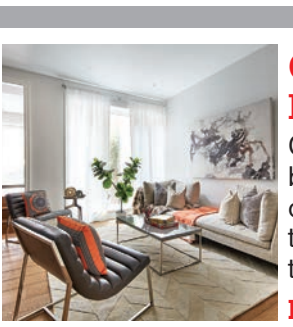
By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After years of being kept in the dark in terms of the Commonwealth's finances, governor-elect Arnold I. Palacios says one of his first acts in office will be to open these books to the public as a gesture of

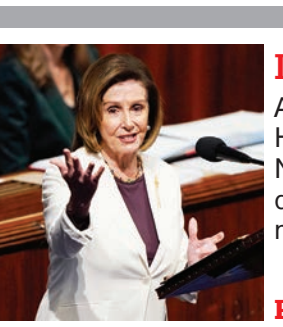
See AD on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Days after flocking to stores on Black Friday, consumers are turning online for Cyber Monday.
PAGE 11



GOOD HOUSEKEEPING
Citrus colors are bright, friendly and are often the perfect way to add pops of color to neutral spaces.
PAGE 14



LIFE & STYLE
A documentary on House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's life will debut on HBO next month.
PAGE 15

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Marie Salas-Igitol, executive officer for the CNMI Office of Veterans Affairs, was the guest speaker at the Rotary Club of Saipan's meeting yesterday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan. She is joined by club officials and fellow Rotarians in this picture.
LEIGH GASES

Veterans' Center sought to be established on Saipan

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Among the several plans for veterans in the CNMI is the establishment of a "Veterans for Veterans Center" in Saipan—preferably somewhere centralized, according to Marie Salas-Igitol, executive officer for the CNMI Office of Veterans Affairs.

Appearing before the Rotary Club of Saipan as its guest speaker during the club's meeting yesterday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan, Salas-Igitol said the center, which could also be near the Office of Veterans Affairs, "would act as a recreational place for our veterans to meet and speak with other veterans; a safe haven for them to come together and hear each other's stories."

Salas-Igitol noted that there are no places for the over 1,700 veterans on the island to gather, and a center where they can meet has always been highly requested by veterans since she assumed her role in the office.

Salas-Igitol said her role is to "serve those who have served, and I do my utmost best to serve our veterans and their beneficiaries, and to make sure their voices and concerns are heard. It's beyond me and the office, it's about all those who call the CNMI home and who have sacrificed their lives for our freedom."

Another of her plans for veterans is to have "Dinner with Veterans" or a "Family Fun Day" during the summer when children are out of school. With that, Salas-Igitol said, this allows the community to remember veterans not only on Veterans Day or Memorial Day. "Let us not just recognize them…let's have something for and with them," she added.

Even with services provided by Willie Peterson, who helps veterans with claims benefits; Dr. Norma S. Ada, of the VA Authorized Outreach Clinic; and Ruth Coleman, who assists with health benefits, Salas-Igitol said there is a need for more resources and counselors to assist veterans.

She highlighted the need for an updated OVA website to disseminate important information to veterans; and a database to keep data systematic so that information about veterans can be easily managed, accessed and updated.

November was proclaimed as Veterans and Military Families Month, and the week of November 4-11 as CNMI Veterans Week.

High Court affirms award of more attorney fees

The CNMI Supreme Court has affirmed a ruling of the Superior Court awarding $49,649.55 to a group of Saipan homeowners who brought suit against the builders of the Tottotville housing project in 2006.

In the original lawsuit, the Northern Marianas Housing Corp., along with two separately represented groups of Tottotville residents, claimed that the Tottoville builders—SSFM International, Inc., Telesource CNMI, Inc., and Telebond Insurance Corp.—had been negligent throughout the construction process and were responsible for defective conditions at the development. The case went to arbitration, and the Superior Court awarded nearly $5 million in damages.

This arbitration award also gave "reasonable" attorney fees to the homeowners, but the court did not determine the exact amount of those fees until several months later. Telesource made payments for more than seven years but ceased in February of 2020, claiming it had met its obligations.

The homeowners disagreed, arguing that the amount of interest on the fees should be calculated from the date of the initial arbitration award and that Telesource was liable for an additional $49,649.55. Relying on a very similar 2006 case from the Supreme Court, *Northern Marianas Housing Corporation v. Flores*, the Superior Court determined that the homeowners were correct and that the additional fees were owed.

The Supreme Court affirmed the ruling, noting that the *Flores* opinion was rightly decided and should be followed. "We decline to overrule *Flores*," wrote the high court, noting that "[u]nder the doctrine of *stare decisis*, we afford a presumption that previous decisions should be followed." Awarding interest from the date that a party earns the right to fees, the Supreme Court added, constitutes sound financial practice because interest is not a penalty but rather a time differential adjustment to the value of the fee award.

The full opinion is available at https://cnmilaw.org/spm22.php#gsc.tab=0 ***(PR)***

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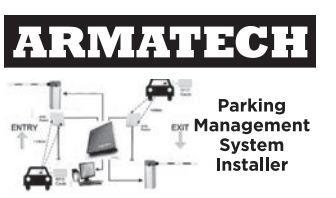

CNMI Cannabis Commission's total budget for FY 2022 is $555,439, collects $44,400 in fees

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Cannabis Commission's total budget for fiscal year 2022 amounted to $555,439, and it collected a total of $44,400 in fees.

The CCC's Citizen-Centric Report for FY 2022, however, noted that the application and licensing fees collected are not considered revenue generated as these fees are considered regulatory fees that do not reflect the collection of licensees' Business Gross Revenue, cannabis tax, and others.

CCC's report disclosed that total personnel expenditures amounted to $49,368, while expenditures for all others amounted to $257,316. This brings total personnel and all other expenditures to a total of $306,685.

The bulk of expenditures went to board and compensation in the amount of $238,634, and to wages and salaries in the amount of $43,100.

The report states that personnel expenditures were utilized to compensate for the managing director's yearly salary and the CCC staff.

Costs reflect the resignation of the managing director during the fiscal year and the reduction in personnel expenses during the period in which the position was vacant.

All other expenditures were utilized to cover costs for the CCC commissioners' salary. Expenditures also include travel and transportation for the Tinian commissioner to assist with application inspections and attend official Commission board meetings.

The remainder of expenses were utilized for operational needs such as office power, supplies, furniture, and the public auditor fees.

On fee collections, the report states that commercial cannabis licensing application fees are nonrefundable and vary in cost depending on the type of license being sought.

CCC collected five applications and a total of $4,000 in application fees from September 2021 to September 2022.

Among those commercial cannabis licensing applications, nine applications were licensed and the CCC collected a total of $40,400 from licensing fees. The figures include renewal applications and licenses.

In fiscal year 2022, CCC reported having to continue facing many challenges due to the ongoing economic shortfall the entire CNMI experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During this time, CCC faced numerous challenges, including its inability to purchase a cannabis tracking system to enable real-time tracking of cannabis within the CNMI.

CCC said a cannabis tracking system is a vital component in all the legalized states in the mainland, as it provides a unified way to report how a licensee produces, packages, labels, delivers, transports, sells, or disposes of cannabis.

A cannabis tracking system would play a key role in preventing legal cannabis from being diverted into the illicit market and would ensure that illegally-grown product are kept out of the legal supply.

Challenges include lack of staff satellite offices on Tinian and Rota, lack of a designated legal counsel, and the resignation of managing director Monique Sablan and commission chair Nadine Deleon Guerrero.

With additional funding provided through the American Rescue Plan Act and other resources, CCC seeks to establish satellite offices and resources on Tinian and Rota.

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairperson of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 2, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Saipan. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
   a. Call to Order
   b. Roll Call
   c. Adoption of Agenda
   d. Adoption of Minutes: March 28, 2022, May 17, 2022, and June 1, 2022
II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
   a. FY 2022 Financial Statements
   b. Financial Statements As of October 31, 2022
IV. OLD BUSINESS
   a. CDBG-DR Updates
V. NEW BUSINESS
   a. Request for Approval - Return and Reallocation: (1) Palm Breeze, (2) Lotus Homes, (3) Ladera Homes
   b. Request for Approval - Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan
   c. Request for Approval - Duplication of Benefits Proposed Amendments
   d. Request for Approval - Amend Homebuyer/New Construction and Rehabilitation/Reconstruction Policies and Procedures Regarding: (1) DTI and Payment to Income Ratios, (2) Household Income Re-Evaluation Period, and (3) Property Value Limits
   e. Request for Approval – De-obligate $14,602,500 from CDBG-DR Infrastructure Program and transfer to CDBG-DR Homebuyer/New Construction Program
   f. Request for Approval - Modify Renter's from a Rent-to-Own Agreement to a Loan Agreement
   g. Request for Approval - Increase HFLP Loan Amount
   h. Request for Approval – FSS Action Plan
VI. LEGAL COUNSEL'S PENDING/ONGOING REPORT
VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
VIII. OTHER MATTERS
IX. ADJOURNMENT

(Notes: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13 (a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/
Merced (Marcie) M. Tomokane
Chairperson of the Board

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House expected to discuss SOCA bill today

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives is expected to discuss in a session today, Wednesday, a bill that seeks to establish a process for the delivery of the governor's State of the Commonwealth Address.

In response to *Saipan Tribune*'s inquiry, House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) said last night that Rep. Ralph N. Yumul's (Ind-Saipan) House Bill 22-119 will be discussed at the session scheduled for today at 10am. He did not elaborate.

Yumul

The bill proposes to establish a process for the delivery of SOCA to the Legislature by the governor. The legislation, which Yumul pre-filed early this month, was supported by House majority members.

The legislation is the only one in the agenda under the introduction of bills.

Yumul stated in the bill that clear legislation is needed to set out some of the basic steps in scheduling the annual delivery of SOCA to the Legislature.

Yumul said in order to address this need to establish a straightforward process for scheduling a SOCA in place of traditional methods that can be inconsistently applied, this legislation creates a statutory, yet flexible, process for scheduling the annual delivery of a SOCA, particularly when the SOCA is delivered live.

Under Yumul's bill, the governor shall deliver an annual SOCA to the Legislature no later than March of any calendar year, and may present the SOCA live, recorded or in writing.

A written or recorded SOCA shall be transmitted by the governor to the Senate president and House speaker for delivery to the members.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

POSSIBLE

From Page 1

satellites and remote locations have shown indications of instability at Ahyi Seamount last Nov. 18, 2022, at 9am and, although hydrophone signals have diminished over the past few weeks, they are still being seen.

"Yellow" and "Advisory" essentially have the same meaning and reflect an activity level that is elevated above background.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey website, both the Volcano Alert Level and Aviation Color Code reflect the danger a volcano poses to people on the ground and infrastructure. The Aviation Color Code is designed specifically for the aviation sector and was originally developed to rapidly communicate to pilots, dispatchers, and air traffic controllers the threats posed to aviation by restless or erupting volcanoes.

The Ahyi seamount is a sizable conical submarine volcano that rises to within 450 ft of the sea surface and is located about 18 kilometers (11 miles) southeast of Farallon de Pajaros (Uracas) Island in the Northern Marianas and is about 370 miles north of the island of Saipan.

Over the underwater volcano, cloudy water has been seen in the past. A fishing boat's crew experienced shocks over the summit region, and they later noticed sulfur-containing water upwelling. An explosive undersea eruption was discovered, by a seismic station on Rangiroa Atoll in the Tuamotu Archipelago at a site not far from the southern base of Ahyi. The event was well contained within nine miles. There may be marine risks above or nearby a restless seamount volcano. Only in the event of increasing activity are aviation hazards potential.

The HSEM news release said that satellite imagery has consistently shown a plume of discolored water above Ahyi Seamount.

"Due to a lack of nearby monitoring stations, we are unable to definitively establish whether this discoloration is triggered by degassing or eruption at the volcano," it stated.

Hydroacoustic sensors at Wake Island, 1,410 miles east of Ahyi, started capturing sounds corresponding to activity from an undersea volcanic source in the middle of October. Recent combined study of the hydroacoustic signals and data from seismic stations in Guam and Chichijima Island, Japan, in cooperation with the Laboratoire de Geophysique in Tahiti, confirm that the source of this activity is at or near Ahyi seamount. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

AD

From Page 1

transparency and rebuilding trust in his administration.

In a news briefing last Monday, Palacios disclosed that he was blocked from accessing the CNMI's financial books even during his tenure as lieutenant governor under the current administration.

However, that ends once he officially assumes the role of governor, he assured, promising that once the transition period begins in January, the Palacios-Apatang administration will prioritize opening the CNMI's financial books to determine where the CNMI stands financially, and how to address any wrongs that may have been left by the departing administration.

"We and the transition team would request for all records of expenditures dating back three, four years. We will look through all of it because that is part of the CNMI's healing process. Sometimes you need to air everything out in order to make sure that if there were any wrongdoings, we correct them. We're not going to do it out of vendetta; it just has to be done. The public deserves that and that is one of our promises from the very beginning; that we will open the books and be very transparent about it. To me, again, that's part of healing this community," Palacios said.

Once the books are reviewed and if any wrongdoings are found, those who need be held accountable will be, he said.

"Those that are flagrantly responsible for any of those wrongdoings would have to be held accountable for it. That's part of good governance. In order for us to right the ship, so to speak, we need to know what is wrong. What happens if the guy that steers the canoe is the one that's wrong? We have to right that by replacing him with somebody else if that's what we have to do. It's not something that I relish doing, but if that's what we have to do, to right our government, that to me, is simple," Palacios said.

As for who will be part of the Palacios-Apatang transition team and Cabinet, Palacios said no decisions have been made yet. However, all those qualified, no matter what their political affiliation is, will be considered through a fair and just vetting process.

"We will have an open application process. So you get to submit your credentials to us and we will vet those to make sure that we put the right people, qualified individuals, in the right positions. There are a lot of qualified individuals in our community but sometimes they're in the wrong positions or wrong line of work. But believe me, now, we will be vetting fairly because we want to be a lot better that the past administration," he said.

HOUSE

From Page 1

ald M. Manglaona (Ind-Rota) and Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations chair Rep. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) set the joint meeting in the House chamber for this Friday at 2pm.

In response to *Saipan Tribune*'s inquiry why "contempt" is on the agenda, Babauta disclosed that it was just so they'd be prepared in case chief of staff to the governor William Castro was not going to be cooperative. "But that was not the case. Castro said that he was willing to cooperate," Babauta said.

She said Castro, who was among the individuals who've been subpoenaed, missed the deadline but that after they called him, he asked for an extension.

Babauta said Castro failed to provide any documents or communicate prior to the deadline yesterday, Tuesday, at 10am. She said they called Castro and that his response was that he thought he was covered by the extension that the committees granted to Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig. The chair said they told Castro he was not covered and that he needs to request for an extension.

"He did so via email and in good faith," said Babauta, adding that she and Manglona agreed to grant Castro an extension.

Babauta also disclosed that Bank of Saipan, which was also served with a subpoena, also requested for an extension.

She said Commerce Secretary Edward M. Deleon Guerrero was only served a subpoena Monday because the House sergeant-at-arms failed to locate him last Tuesday, last week, or before the long holiday.

Babauta said that Bank of Guam, which was also served with a subpoena, responded.

The committees served the subpoena in a bid to find out, among other things, who have been awarded BOOST Program funds and those who have been denied or are still awaiting disposition.

It was Rep. Christina E. Sablan (D-Saipan) who moved the committees to issue subpoenas.

The committees served subpoenas to obtain documents from BOG and BOS related to the administration of the BOOST Program and the role that the banks playsin the program.

The committees served subpoenas to individuals so they could testify before the committees. These individuals are Castro, Atalig, Deleon Guerrero, Commerce director of Economic Development Jesus Taisague, BOS president John Arroyo, BOS employee and BOOST Program administrator Karen Kalen, and BOG vice president/CNMI regional manager Merced "Marcie" Tomokane.

The committees also agreed to issue subpoenas to the Department of Finance, Department of Commerce, Office of the Governor, and BOS. The subpoena compels them to produce BOOST Program records.

The BOOST Program is a project of the Office of the Governor and the Department of Commerce that aims to provide financial assistance to CNMI businesses and nonprofit organizations.

OVER

From Page 1

District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona entered default judgment in favor of the plaintiffs in the amount of $226,127.05 plus post-judgment interest.

According to her official order, Manglona said she decided in favor of a default judgment because she found that USA Fanter's complaint sufficiently alleged facts to establish the four breach of contract claims for IPI's failure to pay; rent in the amount of $61,600; $87,772.55 for the change order work performed; $15,462 for quarry materials and their delivery; and $61,292.50 for the heavy equipment rentals.

"Plaintiff established the amount of damages prayed for through financial consultant Antonio Muña's declaration and numerous invoices signed by IPI. Therefore, having considered the Ninth Circuit's Eitel factors, and pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 55(b)(2), the court granted plaintiffs motion for default judgment in the principal amount of $226,127.05 plus post-judgment interest under the federal rate, which is at 4.76%," the judge stated.

At the motion hearing, attorney Colin Thompson appeared on behalf of USA Fanter while IPI was represented by Tao Xing.

Last week, USA Fanter applied for a default judgment against IPI for its failure to acquire counsel or defend itself in this matter leading to the first entry of default on Nov. 15.

Court documents state that USA Fanter sued IPI for its failure to pay a construction staging lease agreement and construction contract that involved quarry products and heavy equipment rentals.

Without factoring interest or late fees, IPI allegedly owes USA Fanter $61,600 for unpaid property rent; $87,772.55 for the unpaid change order work; $15,462 for unpaid quarry materials; and $61,292.50 for unpaid heavy equipment rentals—for a total of $226,127.05.

The lawsuit further states that on or about Dec. 15, 2015, IPI leased the property owned by USA Fanter by the execution of a staging lease agreement, with the term commencing on Feb. 22, 2016, and ending on Dec. 31, 2018, with no right to extend the term of the lease. Pursuant to the lease, IPI agreed to pay plaintiff rent on or before the 25th day of each month.

Thompson said IPI did make some payments to USA Fanter on a month-to-month basis for its occupancy of the property.

However, when IPI transitioned into a holdover occupancy of the property after the lease agreement ended, the monthly payments were reduced to only $5,600 per month. Thompson said the last payment IPI made to plaintiff for its holdover occupancy of the portion of the property was for July 2019.

The lawyer said USA Fanter served IPI with invoices for the amounts outstanding for the occupancy and use of the property but IPI has not responded to these invoices or demands for payment.

Meanwhile, Thompson said USA Fanter and IPI also executed a written construction contract for construction of off-site improvements that was beyond the scope of their previous construction contract.

On Nov. 20, 2018, plaintiff submitted to IPI a change order proposal detailing the cost breakdown for the additional work, which totaled $87,772.55. On March 28, 2019, IPI sent USA Fanter a letter agreeing to the change order and agreeing to pay plaintiff $87,772.55 upon completion of the change order work. On July of 2019, USA Fanter completed all of the work pursuant to the change order but IPI allegedly refused to make the $87,772.55 payment.

As for the complaint regarding the nonpayment of quarry products and heavy equipment rental, Thompson said IPI ordered that USA Fanter procure and deliver quarry products to the defendant on different occasions and that they'd pay for the products. IPI allegedly failed to pay these orders and rentals that totaled $61,292.50.

Fire breaks out at abandoned structure in As Matuis

On Monday, Nov. 28, 2022, at approximately 2:20pm, a female caller called 911 reporting that an abandoned house in As Matuis before La Fiesta was on fire.

At 2:2.2pm, Medic 2 and Engine 2 from the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services responded to the location. At 2:29pm, Medic 2 was the first to arrive on the scene and did a 360-degree walk around of the building and reported that the first floor of the structure had tables, pallets, and other debris that were on fire. The fire was also making its way up to the structure's second floor, burning through the wooden floor. The fire was extinguished and an all-clear was given at 2:57pm by Charlie Shift Commander Capt. Juan C. Camacho. Camacho also deemed the fire as an accidental fire as the people living around the area were trying to clear some of the lands of vegetation and debris. ***(PR)***

DFEMS

The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services responds a fire that broke out at an abandoned house in As Matuis last Monday, Nov. 28, 2022, at approximately 2:20pm.

US Pacific territories, 'America the Beautiful' Initiative can deliver ocean climate solutions

WASHINGTON, D.C— The U.S. Pacific territories are vast. Combined, their ocean areas are nearly twice the size of Alaska and they are home to some of the world's largest marine protected areas.

A new column co-authored by Angelo Villagomez from the Center for American Progress in Washington, D.C. argues that the region will be critical for achieving the Biden administration's goals to combat climate change, protect 30% of lands and waters by 2030, and ensure access to nature for all Americans.

These tropical ocean waters have some of the highest levels of biodiversity in the United States. Yet many of these species and habitats are sensitive to the extreme threats wrought by climate change, from rising sea levels to warmer and more acidic waters.

The U.S. Pacific territories can help the United States reach its conservation goals, but only if this work is done with indigenous peoples and knowledge leading the way. The column urges the Biden administration to strengthen its relationship with these territories in the following ways:

- Prioritize the U.S. Pacific territories with jobs, programs, and funding;
- Move management decision-making power out of Hawaii and back to the territories;
- Engage with territorial governments to determine the unique needs their citizens have when it comes to ocean conservation.

The column is titled "US Pacific Territories and the America the Beautiful Initiative Can Deliver Ocean Climate Solutions," and is written by Angelo Villagomez, Anuka Upadhye, and Zainab Mirza. ***(PR)***

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

DEVELOPMENT OF ECHO DOCK
PORT OF SAIPAN
CPA RFP NO. CPA-RFP-010-2022
(CPA CONCESSION NO. SEA 2022-01)

The Commonwealth Ports Authority ("Authority") is inviting qualified developers and their development teams to submit sealed proposals, subject to the terms and conditions of this Request for Proposals (the "RFP") and other contract provisions, for the development of Echo Dock, which is situated north of the Port of Saipan. The Executive Director hereby determines that the use of an Invitation for Bid is neither practical nor advantageous to the Authority because the Authority wishes to acquire services and products that cannot be evaluated by cost alone. This RFP is being issued pursuant to NMIAC § 40-70-205.

The RFP Package is available beginning Wednesday, August 31, 2022, at the Authority's Accounting Office, 2nd Floor, Departure Terminal Building, Saipan International Airport upon payment of a non-refundable administrative fee of $200.00. Payment shall be made in cash, credit card, cashier's check, or U.S. postal money order payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority. Other than this administrative fee, proposers are not required to submit a prepaid minimum concession fee.

The Authority will hold a briefing for interested parties at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, September 16, 2022, to explain the Authority's development objectives, the RFP process, and to answer questions. The meeting will be held at the Authority's Seaport Conference Room, George Fleming Building. All potential applicants are encouraged to attend but it is not mandatory.

All proposers are requested to pay attention to the following significant dates and times:

Date RFP Package becomes available	August 31, 2022 (8:00 AM)
Date of RFP briefing meeting	September 16, 2022 (10:00 AM)
Deadline to submit Notice of Intent	September 28, 2022 (4:00 PM)
Deadline to submit Statement of Qualifications	October 13, 2022 (4:00 PM)
Notification of qualified applicants of the RFP	October 28, 2022
Deadline for RFP submission	November 30, 2022 (4:00 PM)

Qualified proposers shall submit their sealed proposals to the "CPA Evaluation Committee" and mark the outside cover of its submittal as follows: "RFP Proposal: Confidential - Development of the Echo Dock, Saipan (RFP-010-2022)." Five (5) hard copies and one electronic copy on CD, DVD, or flash drive of the proposal must be submitted no later than **4:00 p.m. CHST, Wednesday, November 30, 2022**, to the Office of the Executive Director, 2nd floor of the Arrival Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. Proposals submitted by facsimile (fax) transmission will not be considered. Any proposals received after the proposal submittal deadline shall be returned to the proposer unopened. The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted if sufficient justification exist that awarding the project would not be in the best interest of the CPA.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY:

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date 8/26/2022

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6:45 p.m. Oleai Elementary School
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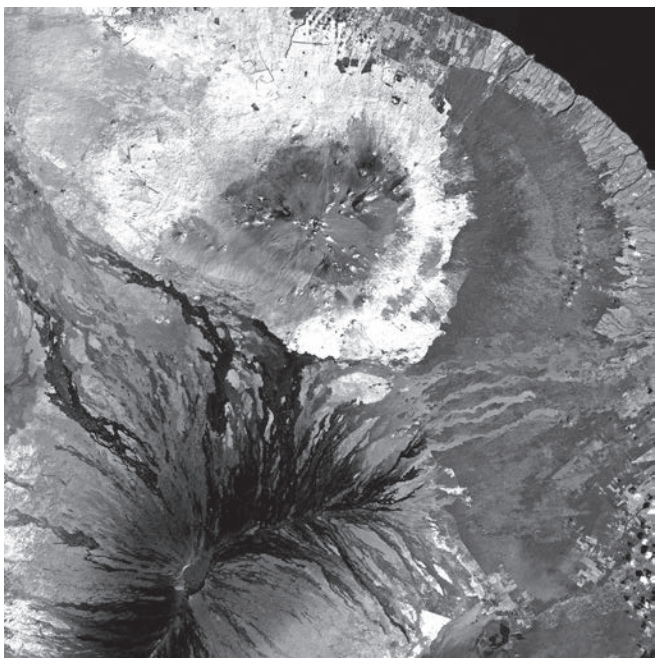
Hawaii volcano erupting for the first time since 1984

HONOLULU—The world's largest active volcano, Mauna Loa on Hawaii's Big Island, is erupting for the first time since 1984.

The eruption began in Moku'āweoweo, the summit caldera of Mauna Loa, on Sunday at approximately 11:30pm HST, according to the Hawaii Volcano Observatory; though lava is flowing down one side of the volcano, there is no indication of a threat to nearby communities at this time.

"U.S. Coast Guard Joint Rescue Coordination Center Honolulu received a call from Hawaii County Civil Defense Agency with a request for support from an Air Station Barbers Point C-130 to conduct an aerial observation flight of the eruption with partners from the U.S. Geological Survey and official's from the state and county," said Lt. Eric Juback, D14 command duty officer. "The Coast Guard values these interagency relationships and stands ready to support emergency operations across the Hawaiian Islands if capable."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

File photo from Jan. 6, 2001, shows the lava-coated summits of Mauna Loa (bottom) and Mauna Kea (top) are colored deep purple in this false-color Landsat image of the Hawaii's Big Island. Along the bottom edge, the crater of Kilauea—the world's most active volcano—is visible as well.

Upon receiving the request, a C-130 Hercules aircrew from Air Station Barbers Point conducted a fly-over with Mayor Mitch Roth, Hawaii Civil Defense Agency, U.S. Geological Survey, and other state and county officials to assess the situation. Video footage was taken from the C-130 at that time showing the progression of the lava flow.

Portions of the Big Island are under an ashfall advisory issued by the National Weather Service in Honolulu. As a precaution, shelters have been opened at Kekuaokalani Gym, Kailua Park in Kona and Robert Herkes Gym in Pahala.

For up-to-date information, visit Hawaii County Civil Defense Agency: https://www.hawaiicounty.gov/civil-defense ***(USCG)***

Rip currents seen until Sunday afternoon

The public is being warned that there is a high risk of rip currents through Sunday afternoon.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, dangerous rip currents are present in east-facing reefs of the Marianas through Sunday afternoon.

Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water. The public is advised to swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. ***(PR)***

Injured fisherman is medevacked to Pohnpei

POHNPEI, FSM—The crew of the USCGC *Frederick Hatch* medically evacuated a 31-year-old Vietnamese fisherman to a higher level of medical care in Pohnpei on Nov. 20.

The *Frederick Hatch* boarding team learned of the fisherman's injuries while conducting a bilateral fisheries boarding with an FSM marine police officer aboard the fishing vessel *Ocean Galaxy* 195 nautical miles (224 statute miles) south of Pohnpei. The ship is a 69.4-meter (227-foot) purse seiner flagged out of Nauru.

"It was an absolute team effort by every member of *Frederick Hatch* to medevac the injured crewmember from the *Ocean Galaxy* successfully. Witnessing each crewmember perform at the highest level after completing two boardings earlier the same day to help a fellow mariner was awesome to watch," said Lt. Patrick Dreiss, commanding officer of *Frederick Hatch*.

The fisherman reportedly fell 12 feet earlier the same day, sustaining a head and possible spinal injury. He was conscious and talking but lost feeling and motion in his right arm and both legs, exhibiting severe concussion symptoms.

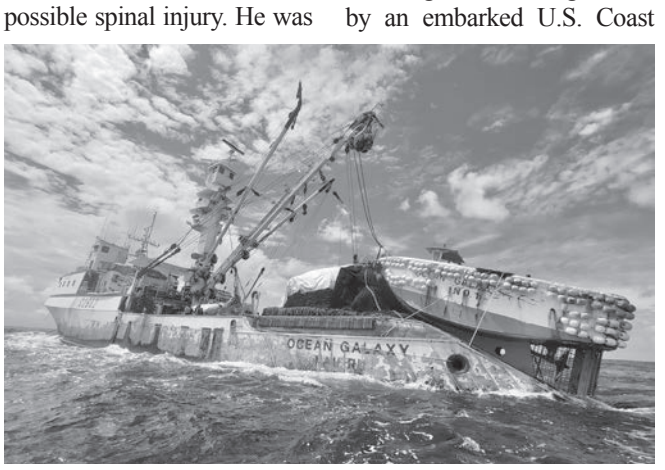
U.S. COAST GUARD/CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER SARA MUIR

The crew of the USCGC *Frederick Hatch* (WPC 1143) and the Federated States of Micronesia Marine Police officer aid a 31-year-old Vietnamese fisherman at the hospital in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, on Nov. 20, 2022, following a medical evacuation from the fishing vessel *Ocean Galaxy* south of Pohnpei.

The *Frederick Hatch* crew consulted the duty flight surgeon remotely through the U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia Joint Rescue Sub-Center, who recommended the medical evacuation. The boarding team, augmented by an embarked U.S. Coast Guard hospital corpsman and linguist, stabilized the fisherman with a cervical collar and secured him onto a miller board. He was safely transferred to the small boat and then onto the *Frederick Hatch*. The crew converted one of the dining tables in the galley into a sick bay to continue monitoring the patient and administering oxygen.

"HS2 Jefferson's actions immediately diagnosing the situation and providing the highest level of care possible in a difficult environment is the pinnacle of what can go right when medical professionals are aboard Fast Response Cutters in this region. Many of us joined the Coast Guard to help others at sea and do exactly what we did in this case," said Dreiss."

The *Frederick Hatch* completed the transit to Pohnpei in about eight hours to arrive around midnight and transferred the injured fisherman to a waiting emergency medical services, who took him to the local hospital. The hospital corpsman and linguist accompanied the fisherman to pass on relevant medical details and ensure hospital staff could communicate with him.



U.S. COAST GUARD /SEAMAN PAULA BETANCOURT

The crew of the USCGC *Frederick Hatch* (WPC 1143) approach the *Ocean Galaxy* to conduct a fisheries boarding 195 nautical miles south of Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, on Nov. 20, 2022. The ship is a 69.4-meter (227-foot) purse seiner flagged out of Nauru. The boarding became a medical evacuation of an injured fisherman.

The crew of the USCGC *Frederick Hatch* (WPC 1143) transfers a 31-year-old Vietnamese fisherman of the vessel *Ocean Galaxy* from the *Hatch* to emergency medical services for further transport to a higher level of medical care in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, on Nov. 20, 2022.

U.S. COAST GUARD/CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER SARA MUIR

"Every crewmember volunteered to assist in any way. I specifically want to call out the boarding team's creativity in overcoming the challenging distance from the purse seiner's deck to the small boat, where BMC Peternel's skill as a coxswain was vital to maintaining a stable platform in pitching seas during the difficult lowering of the fisherman on a backboard. Our translator, Lt. Wong, stayed by the fisherman's side for 10 hours to translate and comfort him through the whole evolution, and EM3 Edwards, a junior petty officer, stepped up to oversee and direct the multitude of deck operations throughout the day. This crew rose to the occasion and truly was at their best in someone's worst hour. I could not be more proud of them," said Dreiss.

The *Frederick Hatch* crew initially boarded the vessel with an FSM shiprider for potentially fishing in FSM exclusive economic zone without a license. The master produced an FSM-Nauru bilateral fisheries license, meeting the requirement, and noted their primary target species was tuna.

The *Frederick Hatch* is on an expeditionary patrol in Oceania in support of Operation Rematau and Operation Blue Pacific to promote security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity in Oceania. In Micronesia, Rematau means people of the deep sea. It highlights the connection between mariners and honors the shared understanding in the Pacific that securing the future requires long-term vision and a carefully considered regional strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. ***(USCG)***

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

U.S. COAST GUARD/CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER SARA MUIR

The crew of the USCGC *Frederick Hatch* (WPC 1143), met by local ambulance, medically evacuates a 31-year-old Vietnamese fisherman to a higher level of medical care in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, on Nov. 20, 2022.

U.S. COAST GUARD/SEAMAN PAULA BETANCOURT

The *Ocean Galaxy* crew awaits the arrival of the USCGC *Frederick Hatch* (WPC 1143) boarding team who medically evacuated a 31-year-old Vietnamese fisherman to a higher level of medical care in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, on Nov. 20, 2022.

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STK:18P405 • 14,880 MILES • KBB: $19,004

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STK:19R276 • 25,928 MILES • KBB: $24,321

2016 MAZDA CX-5 TOUR

SALE PRICE $14,995 SOLD
STK:16P435 • 39,365 MILES • KBB: $23,370

2017 MAZDA MAZDA6 GT

SALE PRICE $14,995 SOLD
STK:22M187A • 39,321 MILES • KBB: $20,910

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SALE PRICE $14,995
STK:21H079A • 23,502 MILES • KBB: $21,064

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SALE PRICE $14,995
STK:21D129A • 24,415 MILES • KBB: $20,789

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2019 HYUNDAI KONA

SALE PRICE $16,995
STK:8H054-E • 16,634 MILES • KBB: $21,651

2018 MAZDA CX-5 TOURING

SALE PRICE $16,995 SOLD
STK:18P398 • 63,150 MILES • KBB: $23,263

2019 HYUNDAI TUCSON

SALE PRICE $17,995 SOLD
STK:22M017A • 29,455 MILES • KBB: $27,884

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2018 TOYOTA TACOMA

SALE PRICE $26,995
STK:18P344 • 15,863 MILES • KBB: $34,836

2013 TOYOTA FJ CRUISER

SALE PRICE $24,995
STK:13P359 • 85,405 MILES • KBB: $33,890

2019 HONDA RIDGELINE

SALE PRICE $29,995
STK:19P367 • 25,570 MILES • KBB: $47,459

2018 GENESIS G90

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STK:20H141E • 16,622 MILES • KBB: $38,204

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Opinion

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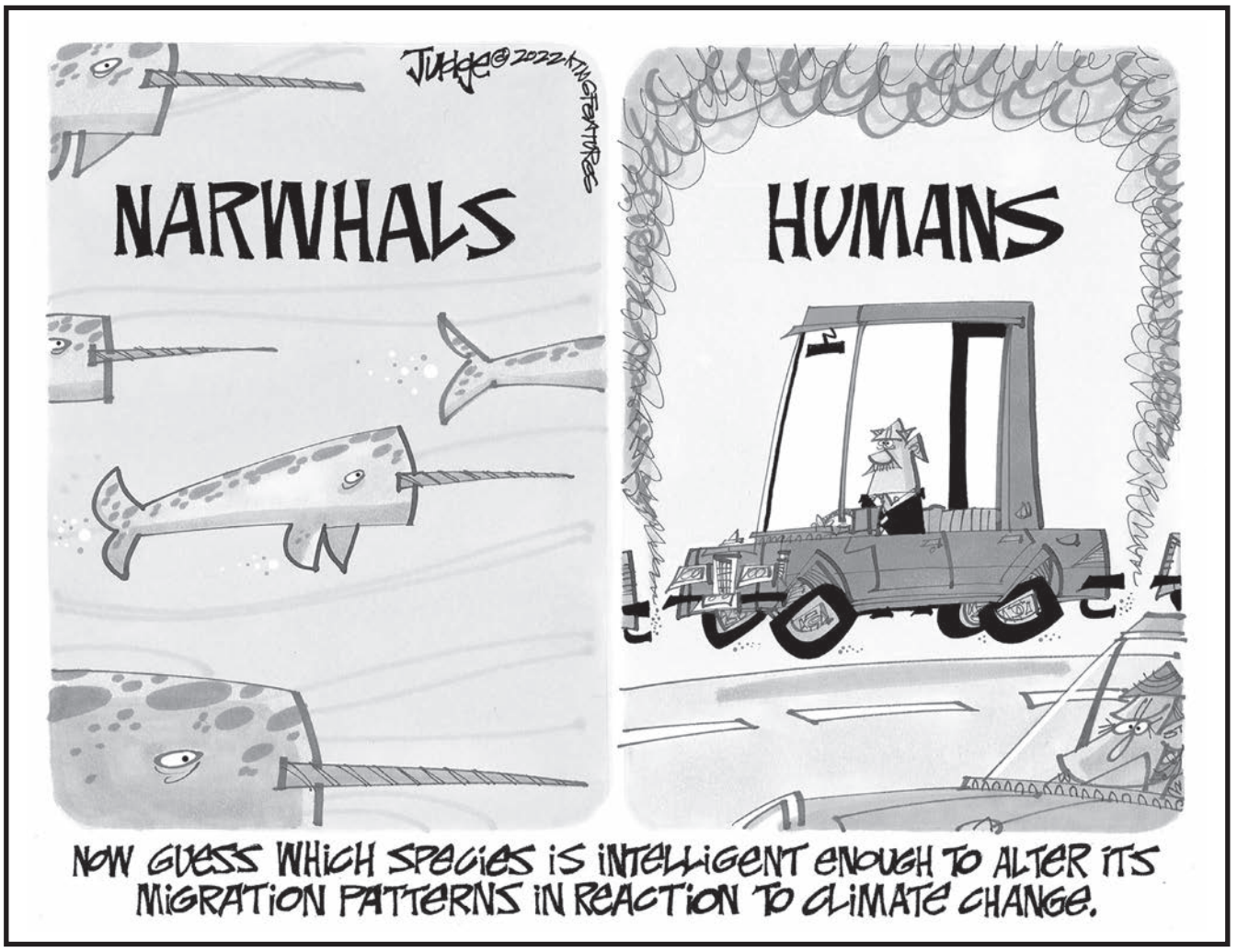
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EDITORIAL

The elections are over, but foreign election meddling isn't

A top Russian oligarch and ally of Vladimir Putin openly stated that his country has engaged in U.S. election meddling and would continue doing so in future elections. That's not exactly news, even if it's the first such admission by someone so close to Putin. But the methods of meddling are what merit more congressional scrutiny because a gaping hole for exploitation remains in the U.S. election system: dark campaign money.

U.S. law forbids the acceptance of foreign campaign donations, but federal law effectively allows for foreign donations to flood in surreptitiously through political action committees and lobbyists linked to foreign governments. The Supreme Court's Citizens United and other rulings opened the door to anonymous dark money campaign contributions with far more limited options for election officials to verify the source of donations.

The court has not only ruled that campaign funding is a form of free speech but also, in 2012, that anonymity in campaign funding is a fundamental freedom-of-association and free speech right.

A giant loophole now exists for foreign governments and special interests to funnel money to their favored candidates and political causes, often through lobbyists. And the Russians aren't the only ones apparently working to exploit the system. The United Arab Emirates is under increased U.S. scrutiny for political meddling, The Washington Post reported recently. Saudi Arabia has a host of political concerns that the kingdom would like to influence in more direct ways than the traditional diplomatic options offer.

Putin's apparent goal is not so much to influence as to destabilize and undermine American democracy. Dark money allows him to direct funds via lobbyists to the candidates most likely to do his bidding. No proof has surfaced directly connecting Donald Trump's 2016 campaign to Russian donations, but the taint of Putin's influence permeated almost everything Trump did before and after he took office.

In October 2021, Lev Parnas, a Soviet-born former business associate of Trump's lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, was convicted of currying influence with U.S. politicians through various dark-money routes. Russian oligarch Yevgeny Prigozhin, nicknamed "Putin's chef," bluntly stated in a recent interview: "Gentlemen, we interfered, we interfere (now), and we will interfere."

Earlier this month, the Atlantic Council reported that Putin has an estimated $1 trillion in dark money hidden in accounts outside Russia to buy influence. The funds "pose a serious national security threat to the United States because this money can be exploited and steered by the Kremlin for espionage, terrorism, industrial espionage, bribery, political manipulation, disinformation, and many other nefarious purposes."

See ELECTIONS on Next Page

Where abortion will be on the ballot in 2024

By JULIANNA GOLDMAN
Bloomberg Opinion

Julianna Goldman is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist who was formerly a Washington-based correspondent for CBS News and White House correspondent for Bloomberg News and Bloomberg Television.*

The abortion rights issue was a political lifesaver for Democrats this year. Whether it will be again in 2024 depends in part on efforts to put the question of reproductive rights on the ballot—not just through the candidates' positions, but literally.

The issue helped to fend off a red wave by both motivating the base and persuading undecided voters. Restrictive abortion laws are out of touch with public opinion, which was made resoundingly clear the six out of six times voters were asked about the issue in Vermont, California, Kentucky, Michigan, Montana and Kansas. Now abortion activists are asking which other states are ripe for initiatives to protect reproductive rights.

For Democrats, the stakes are even higher than they were this year. In 2024, they will be playing defense not only with the White House but also with 23 Senate seats (including two independents). Republicans, meanwhile, have only 10 Senate seats to defend, with most in solidly red states.

As the fight over abortion rights plays out, keep an eye on two states in particular—Missouri and Ohio—where efforts are further along. The questions are whether and how reproductive-rights groups move forward with ballot initiatives, and what sort of resistance they face from their pro-life counterparts.

Depending on the state, there are a number of ways measures can get on the ballot. Legislatures can produce ballot initiatives that either restrict or enhance abortion rights. Legislators in New Jersey , for example, are currently looking into a ballot measure for next year to enshrine abortion rights in the state constitution.

Another way is for citizens to petition to get measures on the ballot. That's an option in 22 states plus the District of Columbia; of those, only in 17 can a ballot measure modify the state's constitution. That's what happened in the purple state of Michigan, when voters this year established abortion rights as part of the state's constitution, reelected Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and put Democrats in control of the state legislature for the first time since 1984.

In Ohio, the stakes are high for three-term Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown, who is up for reelection in 2024. The state is solidly red, but nearly 60% of registered voters would support codifying abortion rights in the state's constitution. On the ground, abortion access is mired in litigation.

After the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in June, the state legislature enacted a law banning abortion after six weeks. In October, a state court blocked that ban. That ruling is being appealed. And after November's elections, says Jessie Hill, a professor at Case Western University who has been fighting the law, the Ohio Supreme Court has an anti-abortion majority.

If the court reinstates the ban, Hill says, "the only response to that would be a ballot initiative." One complicating factor, she notes, is that Ohio's Republican secretary of state has proposed a bill that would make it more difficult for citizen-led initiatives to get on the ballot.

In red states, Hill says, the data suggest that it's easier to get people to vote against an abortion ban than it is to get them to vote in favor of an abortion rights amendment. That was the case in Kentucky and Kansas, where voters rejected abortion bans. How an amendment is phrased, she says, is crucial: whether to go broad and propose a blanket protection of abortion, or to use more narrow wording, for example to protect abortion only in the first trimester, in an attempt to appeal to more people.

Abortion proponents and foes are also eyeing Missouri, where there is a complete ban on abortion. In two years, there will be races for governor and secretary of state. Republican Sen. Josh Hawley, a Trump ally who won with 51.4% in 2018, is also up for reelection.

The state has a history of ballot initiatives. This year, 53% of voters supported a ballot initiative legalizing marijuana. In 2018, 62% approved a minimum wage hike. In 2020, they approved Medicaid expansion. It's clear why Republicans, who have a majority in the state legislature, are pushing efforts to make the initiative petition process more onerous.

Abortion rights activists began looking into state ballot initiatives even before November's midterms. They're polling in several states and mining available voter data in Kansas, Michigan and Kentucky. They are also working with groups such as the Fairness Project , a progressive organization that helps develop and organize ballot measures, to determine what's viable, raise money and draft language.

Kelly Hall, the Fairness Project's executive director, acknowledges that there may be "coattail effects" from ballot measures that benefit Democratic candidates in 2024. But she also makes clear that the priority is protecting abortion rights: "Our view is let's not let the tail wag the dog," she says.

True enough. Still, if there are coattails, they're ones Democrats can and should be chasing.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The promise of change

By CHRISTINA 'TINA' SABLAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rep. Christina "Tina" Sablan is a member of the CNMI House of Representatives in the 22nd Legislature.

Editor's Note: The following is the statement the author delivered at Tuesday's press conference with governor-elect Arnold I. Palacios, lieutenant governor-elect David M. Apatang, and Rep. Leila Staffler (D-Saipan).

It feels like a brand new day in the Marianas. Leila Staffler and I join our fellow Democrats in extending our sincerest congratulations to governor-elect Arnold I. Palacios and lieutenant governor-elect David M. Apatang on their decisive victory, which truly is the victory of the people.

I am proud of the strength and unity of our coalition, and the focused determination we showed in this runoff election. Democrats, independents, as well as Republicans rallied to make sure that we would see the change in leadership that we so badly need in our Commonwealth.

And together, we won.

Every vote mattered in this election. I am grateful beyond measure to every citizen who showed up to vote, and especially the people who voted for Leila and me on Nov. 8 and who delivered the critical margin of victory for Arnold and Dave in the runoff.

Arnold and Dave are coming in with so much goodwill and hope from all corners of the islands. I have been hearing this sentiment every day, everywhere I go. People are yearning for change, yearning for a fair and trustworthy government, and they are looking to Arnold and Dave, and the coalition of leaders we've brought together, to light the way.

People will be paying very close attention to the transition, because it will demonstrate the kind of leadership we will be able to expect from the Palacios-Apatang administration.

Typically and historically, the transition process has been a time of fear and trepidation for some. A time of jockeying for jobs and contracts. Calling in favors. Waging vendettas.

It is my hope and expectation that this transition will be different. Because Arnold and Dave have promised to be different. They've promised to rebuild trust. They've promised to heal.

It is essential that the transition reflect the values and commitments to good governance outlined in the Unity Pledge that we signed and unveiled a little over a week ago.

These are the values of fairness, integrity, transparency, and fiscal responsibility. These are the commitments to open up the books and be honest with the people about the true fiscal condition of our government and where we go from here. The commitment to end the culture of political intimidation, cronyism, and nepotism in our government. To ensure fairness in government hiring and contracting. To restore the merit-based system of public employment, and accept applications for political appointments as well. To exercise due diligence and care in considering all appointments to positions of authority, including but not limited to our law enforcement agencies.

We need ethical, qualified people in leadership across our government.

As Arnold and Dave and Leila and I often said during the campaign, good governance starts at the top. It's the leadership that sets the tone. It's the leadership that upholds the law. It's the leadership that models the conduct that is expected of public servants at every level of government.

But the leadership can't do it all alone at the top. Arnold and Dave will need help. They will need honest, capable women and men willing to serve and willing to lead. They will need people to be vigilant and engaged and speak up if they see something wrong, and if they have ideas for how things could be better.

We should expect more of our government, and our leaders. And we should also expect more of ourselves, as citizens, to do our part in building a better community where everyone can thrive. We have many problems facing our government and our Commonwealth, but these problems are solvable. We can fix our problems and make the Marianas the amazing place it has always had the potential to be.

The people have given the new Palacios-Apatang administration a clear mandate, and placed in them their trust that Arnold and Dave will be faithful to their promises. And we should all, as citizens, help them right the ship of our government and set our Commonwealth on a new course to a safer, healthier, more equitable, and more beautiful future.

Sorry, kids, I shouldn't have doubted your turning out to vote

By SYL SOBEL
The Baltimore Sun

Syl Sobel is an author of children's books on U.S. history and civics, including *How the U.S. Government Works, Presidential Elections and Other Cool Facts,* and *The U.S. Constitution and You.* His website is www.sylsobel.com.

Dear Millennials and Generation Zers: I'm sorry. I should have believed in you.

Ever since I started writing children's books on civics more than 20 years ago, I've talked with you in schools, in libraries and at book fairs. I've taken your questions about government and tried to answer them. I've known that you want to learn how government works and why. If something doesn't seem right or fair, you want to know why not and try to fix it.

I watched you grow along with my own kids through high school and college. I've seen how you watch out for each other and care about each other. I've noticed that you don't have the same biases and hang-ups that many of us still have about race or gender or sexuality or nationality or religion or political party. I've seen that you value people for who they are, not for what they are or what they believe. I've watched you travel and explore and learn about other cultures and sometimes even adopt something they do because you like it and it makes sense to you. I've seen you show respect for each other and each other's beliefs.

For years, when people told me they feared for our country's future, I always said "I don't," because I had confidence in the next generation to do better than we did and to learn from and correct our mistakes.

So I'm not sure why I lost my faith going into this past election. I don't know why I believed the pundits who said young people weren't going to vote in big numbers because they rarely have in the past. I don't know why I thought that important matters like personal freedom, education, gun safety, and civility and compromise in governance didn't matter to you anymore.

But you showed us. You proved the pollsters wrong. You turned out and voted, giving us the second highest showing for a midterm in your demographic in 30 years, according to estimates by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University.

You told us you were tired of extreme partisanship. That you wanted our elected leaders to do something for the people and not just for their parties. You told us you were sick of posturing and polarization and that you wanted action to improve people's lives. You told us you didn't care what happened in the past, that you wanted to know what our politicians were going to do to improve the common good in the future.

Because the future is yours.

I think the best thing that could happen in this country is for aging baby boomers and Gen Xers to get out of the way and let the next generations take over. I believe we had good intentions, but somewhere along the way we mucked it up. We saw governance as a competitive sport and not as a public service. It became about winning and not about doing. I'm afraid we've kind of made a mess.

But if the Nov. 8 election told us anything, it's that you get it. You see the mess, and you're tired of it. You want the noise and contentiousness to stop. You don't want your personal freedoms to get tossed back and forth like a political football. You want commonsense regulation to reduce gun violence. You want the education that's needed to fill important jobs to be available and affordable—to everyone. You want us to stop destroying the planet. And you're tired of waiting for us to do it and are ready to take over and do it yourselves.

Good. Go for it!

ELECTIONS

From Page 8

Rep. Katie Porter, D-Calif., introduced a bill last year to prohibit campaign committees from accepting money from lobbyists registered with a foreign country. Considering that dark money represents the easiest and fastest way for Russia and other governments to buy politicians and wreak havoc, Congress should make closing that gap one of its top priorities.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The pulpit bully

Robert Hunter, you have used your podium in the Governor's Office to troll and bully citizens of the CNMI for too long and we are glad that you are gone! You have some nerve to try and insinuate that Tina is bad for the CNMI when you and your Gov. Ralph have been two of the worst things that have come along in the past two decades. You are making yourself look silly and like a sore loser for the entire CNMI to see. For me it is more about being jealous and envious that Tina continues to climb the ladder of success, as Tina and Leila were still able to get Arnold and Dave to agree on doing many of the things they had intended to implement. In the end, it was a win for the people in this election, which is who Tina and Leila were fighting for! It's not changing the narrative like you are implying; it's about changing and healing the political fabric of the CNMI that your governor, has decimated with his attempts to get everything his way. I'm just glad we also got rid of you having any chance of ever being back on Capital Hill.

You are attacking Tina because you know it's not in her to even address your silly antics as she will always go high with dignity when people like you go low and ugly. You need to be glad you didn't grow up in my old neighborhood because bullies like you, especially the ones who pick on girls or women, would get a real beat-down, but this verbal beating is all I can do to address your ugly and unnecessary attack on Tina.

FYI, Tina will one day be our governor as it's just a matter of time. There were only 12 candidates in the Democrat Party but there were 29 GOP and 33 independents for a total of 12 against 62, which is one of the main reasons Tina lost if you want the true political science reason for her losing, not your alleged repudiation by voters, as she was just out-gunned and out-manned. The reality is Tina and Leila have created genuine unity and harmony in our political arena.

Robert Hunter, you are a nobody now still trying to be a somebody when the only titles you have gotten in the community is a troll and a bully. This guy needed to be put in his place with his ugly antics. I write about elected officials who are fair game and I only write the truth, it's just that I put a point with an edge in my writing that can really make it hurt and I hope this one will penetrate your verbal skin. I hope and look forward to your reply so I can "finish you" as locals say, once and for all!

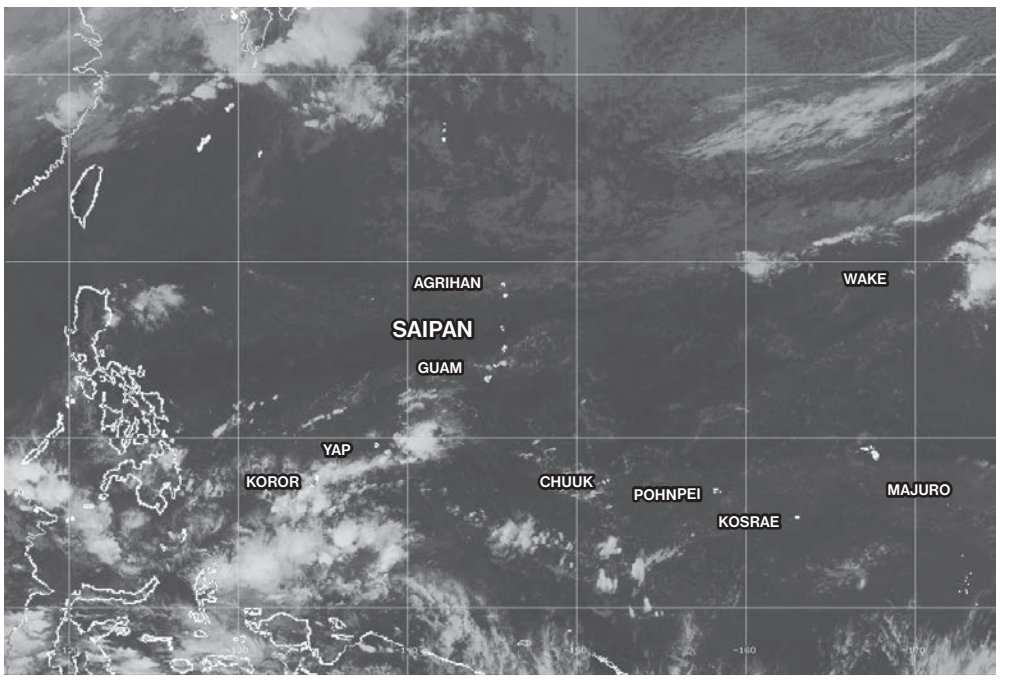
Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman III, Saipan

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Scattered showers. Partly sunny	Scattered showers. Partly sunny,	A 30 percent chance of showers. Partly sunny	A chance of showers. Partly sunny	A chance of showers. Partly sunny
86° 78°	86° 78°	86° 78°	86° 78°	86° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:44 AM, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite and radar imagery showed scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over the Marianas this morning.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°
Palau	Scattered Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	88° / 81°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	88° / 77°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	87° / 80°
Majuro	Mostly Sunny	84° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:26 AM	5:44 PM
Thursday	6:26 AM	5:44 PM
Friday	6:27 AM	5:44 PM
Saturday	6:28 AM	5:45 PM
Sunday	6:28 AM	5:45 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	12:19 PM	-	-
Thursday	12:44 PM	-	-
Friday	-	12:17 AM	1:35 PM
Saturday	-	1:17 AM	2:20 PM
Sunday	-	2:14 AM	3:01 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Rain/Thunder	68° / 57°
Beijing	Sunny	32° / 15°
Hong Kong	Cloudy	71° / 58°
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	83° / 72°
London	Cloudy	49° / 40°
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	67° / 48°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	91° / 79°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	67° / 53°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	81° / 76°
New York	Partly Cloudy	47° / 40°
Osaka	Cloudy	61° / 44°
Paris	Cloudy	46° / 40°
Busan	Mostly Cloudy	38° / 27°
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	61° / 41°
Salem	Showers	70° / 61°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	56° / 40°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	27° / 15°
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	68° / 48°
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	54° / 45°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
6:37 AM	Low Tide	-0.34
2:19 PM	High Tide	1.77
8:18 PM	Low Tide	1.04
-	-	-

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:00AM	7:45AM	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau
OZ624/701	3:40PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

OZ624	3:40PM	7:40PM	3, 6
TW308	4:30PM	8:20PM	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

BX621	3:10PM	6:30PM	3, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA184	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:40PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ623	9:00AM	2:40PM	3, 6
TW307	10:00AM	3:30PM	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

BX622	8:00AM	1:10PM	3, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS

INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.	
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.	
4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.	
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.	

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	
2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.	

SAIPAN TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.	
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.	

GUAM TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	
6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.	

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Cyber Monday deals lure in consumers amid high inflation

NEW YORK (AP)—Days after flocking to stores on Black Friday, consumers are turning online for Cyber Monday to score more discounts on gifts and other items that have ballooned in price because of high inflation.

Cyber Monday is expected to remain the year's biggest online shopping day and rake in up to $11.6 billion in sales, according to Adobe Analytics, which tracks transactions at over 85 of the top 100 U.S. online stores. That forecast represents a jump from the $10.7 billion consumers spent last year.

Adobe's numbers are not adjusted for inflation, but the company says demand is growing even when inflation is factored in. Some analysts have said top line numbers will be boosted by higher prices and the amount of items consumers purchase could remain unchanged—or even fall—compared to prior years. Profit margins are also expected to be tight for retailers offering deeper discounts to attract budget-conscious consumers and clear out their bloated inventories.

AP
In this Dec. 12, 2016, photo, a person searches the internet for sales, in Miami. Days after flocking to stores on Black Friday, consumers are turning on.

Shoppers spent a record $9.12 billion online on Black Friday, up 2.3% from last year, according to Adobe. E-commerce activity continued to be strong over the weekend, with $9.55 billion in online sales.

Salesforce, which also tracks spending, said their estimates showed online sales in the U.S. hit $15 billion on Friday and $17.2 billion over the weekend, with an average discount rate of 30% on products. Electronics, active wear, toys and health and beauty items were among those that provided a big boost, the two groups said.

CONSUMERS ARE SPENDING CAUTIOUSLY

Mastercard SpendingPulse, which tracks spending across all types of payments including cash and credit card, said that overall sales on Black Friday rose 12% from the year-ago. Sales at physical stores rose 12%, while online sales were up 14%.

RetailNext, which captures sales and traffic via cameras reported that store traffic rose 7% on Black Friday, while sales at physical stores improved 0.1% from a year ago. However, spending per customer dropped nearly 7% as cautious shoppers did more browsing than buying. Another company that tracks store traffic—Sensormatic Solutions—said store traffic was up 2.9% on Black Friday compared to a year ago.

"Shoppers are being more thoughtful, but they are going to more than a few retailers to be able to make a determination of what they are going to buy this year," said Brian Field, Sensormatic's global leader of retail consulting and analytics.

Danny Groner, a 39-year-old who lives in New York City, said he and his wife want to get a new TV to replace one they've had for about seven years. He spent some time on Monday searching for deals online and found some good discounts. Still, he says he wants to be intentional about what he buys and doesn't mind spending a bit more for the right product.

Overall, online spending has remained resilient in the past few weeks as eager shoppers buy more items on credit and embrace "buy now, pay later" services that lack interest charges but carry late fees.

In the first three weeks of November, online sales were essentially flat compared with last year, according to Adobe. It said the modest uptick shows consumers have a strong appetite for holiday shopping amid uncertainty about the economy.

Still, some major retailers are feeling a shift. Target, Macy's and Kohl's said this month they've seen a slowdown in consumer spending in the past few weeks. The exception was Walmart, which reported higher sales in its third quarter and raised its earnings outlook.

"We're seeing that inflation is starting to really hit the wallet and that consumers are starting to amass more debt at this point," said Guru Hariharan, founder and CEO of retail e-commerce management firm CommerceIQ, adding there's more pressure on consumers to purchase cheaper alternatives.

Biden calls on Congress to head off potential rail strike

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—President Joe Biden on Monday asked Congress to intervene and block a railroad strike before next month's deadline in the stalled contract talks, and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said lawmakers would take up legislation this week to impose the deal that unions agreed to in September.

"Let me be clear: a rail shutdown would devastate our economy," Biden said in a statement. "Without freight rail, many U.S. industries would shut down."

In a statement, Pelosi said: "We are reluctant to bypass the standard ratification process for the Tentative Agreement — but we must act to prevent a catastrophic nationwide rail strike, which would grind our economy to a halt."

Pelosi said the House would not change the terms of the September agreement, which would challenge the Senate to approve the House bill without changes.

The September agreement that Biden and Pelosi are calling for is a slight improvement over what the board of arbitrators recommended in the summer. The September agreement added three unpaid days off a year for engineers and conductors to tend to medical appointments as long as they scheduled them at least 30 days in advance. The railroads also promised in September not to penalize workers who are hospitalized and to negotiate further with the unions after the contract is approved about improving the regular scheduling of days off.

Hundreds of business groups had been urging Congress and the president to step into the deadlocked contract talk and prevent a strike.

Both the unions and railroads have been lobbying Congress while contract talks continue. If Congress acts, it will end talks between the railroads and four rail unions that rejected their deals Biden helped broker before the original strike deadline in September. Eight other unions have approved their five-year deals with the railroads and are in the process of getting back pay for their workers for the 24% raises that are retroactive to 2020.

If Congress does what Biden suggests and imposes terms similar to what was agreed on in September, that will end the union's push to add paid sick time. The four unions that have rejected their deals have been pressing for the railroads to add that benefit to help address workers' quality of life concerns, but the railroads had refused to consider that.

Biden said that as a "a proud pro-labor president" he was reluctant to override the views of people who voted against the agreement. "But in this case — where the economic impact of a shutdown would hurt millions of other working people and families—I believe Congress must use its powers to adopt this deal."

Walmart shooting raises need for violence prevention at work

NEW YORK (AP)—The mass shooting Wednesday at a Walmart in Virginia was only the latest example of a workplace shooting perpetrated by an employee.

But while many companies provide active shooter training, experts say there is much less focus on how to prevent workplace violence, particularly how to identify and address worrisome behavior among employees.

Workers far too often don't know how to recognize warning signs, and even more crucially don't know how to report suspicious behavior or feel empowered to do so, according to workplace safety and human resources experts.

"We have built an industry around how to lock bad guys out. We have heavily invested in physical security measure like metal detectors, cameras and armed security guards," said James Densley, professor of criminal justice at Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minnesota, and cofounder of the nonprofit and nonpartisan research group The Violence Project. But too often in workplace shootings, he said, "this is someone who already has access to the building."

The Walmart shooting in particular raised questions of whether employees feel empowered to speak up because it was a team leader who carried out the shooting.

Identified by Walmart as 31-year-old Andre Bing, he opened fire on fellow employees in the break room of the Chesapeake store, killing six people and leaving six others wounded. Police said he then apparently killed himself.

Employee Briana Tyler, who survived the shooting, said Bing appeared not to be aiming at anyone in particular. Tyler, who started at Walmart two months ago, said she never had a negative encounter with Bing, but others told her that he was "the manager to look out for." She said Bing had a history of writing people up for no reason.

Walmart launched a computer-based active shooter training in 2015, which focused on three pillars: avoid the danger, keep your distance and lastly, defend. Then, in 2019 after a mass shooting at an El Paso, Texas, store in which an outside gunman killed 22 people, Walmart addressed the threat to the public by discontinuing sales of certain kinds of ammunition and asked that customers no longer openly carry firearms in its stores. It now sells only hunting rifles and related ammunition.

Nation

Erupting Hawaii volcano spurs warning for people to prepare

KAILUA-KONA, Hawaii (AP)—Waves of orange, glowing lava and smoky ash belched and sputtered Monday from the world's largest active volcano in its first eruption in 38 years, and officials told people living on Hawaii's Big Island to be ready in the event of a worst-case scenario.

The eruption of Mauna Loa wasn't immediately endangering towns, but the U.S. Geological Survey warned the roughly 200,000 people on the Big Island that an eruption "can be very dynamic, and the location and advance of lava flows can change rapidly."

Officials told residents to be ready to evacuate if lava flows start heading toward populated areas.

The eruption began late Sunday night following a series of fairly large earthquakes, said Ken Hon, scientist-in-charge at the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory.

The areas where lava was emerging — the volcano's summit crater and vents along the volcano's northeast flank — are both far from homes and communities.

AP

Lava pours out of the summit crater of Mauna Loa about 6:35 a.m. Monday, Nov. 28, 2022, as seen from Gilbert Kahele Recreation Area on Maunakea, Hawaii.

Officials urged the public to stay away from them, given the dangers posed by lava, which is shooting 100 to 200 feet (30 to 60 meters) into the air out of three separate fissures roughly estimated to be 1 to 2 miles (1.6 to 3.2 kilometers) long.

Volcanic gases wafting out of the vents, primarily sulfur dioxide, are also harmful.

Air quality on the Big Island more generally is good right now but officials are monitoring it carefully, said Dr. Libby Char, the director of the state Department of Health.

Hon said air quality could deteriorate while the eruption lasts, which scientists expect will be about one or two weeks if the volcano follows historical patterns.

Lifelong Big Island resident Bobby Camara, who lives in Volcano Village, said everyone across the island should keep track of the eruption. He said he's seen three Mauna Loa eruptions in his lifetime and stressed the need for vigilance.

"I think everybody should be a little bit concerned," he said. "We don't know where the flow is going, we don't know how long it's going to last."

Gunner Mench, who owns an art gallery in Kamuela, said he awoke shortly after midnight and saw an alert on his phone about the eruption.

Mench and his wife, Ellie, ventured out to film the eerie red glow cast over the island, watching as lava spilled down the volcano's side.

"You could see it spurting up into the air, over the edge of this depression," Mench said.

"Right now it's just entertainment, but the concern is" it could reach populated areas, he said.

Seeing Mauna Loa erupt is a new experience for many residents of the Big Island, where the population has more than doubled from 92,000 in 1980.

More than a third of the island's residents live either in the city of Kailua-Kona to the west of the volcano, or about 23,000 people, and Hilo to the east, with about 45,000. Officials were most worried about several subdivisions some 30 miles (50 kilometers) to the volcano's south that are home to about 5,000 people.

A time-lapse video of the eruption from overnight showed lava lighting up one area, moving across it like waves on the ocean.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the eruption had migrated to a rift zone on the volcano's northeast flank. Rift zones are where the mountain rock is cracked and relatively weak — making it easier for magma to emerge.

Lava could move toward the county seat of Hilo, but that could take about a week, Hon said at a news conference.

Scientists hope the flow will parallel the 1984 eruption, where the lava was more viscous and slowed down.

Mauna Loa has another rift zone on its southwest flank. Lava could reach nearby communities in hours or days if the volcano erupts from this area. But Hon said historically Mauna Loa has never erupted from both rift zones simultaneously.

"So we presume at this point that all of the future activity is going to be on the northeast rift zone of Mauna Loa and not on the southeast rift zone," he said. "So those residents in that area do not have to worry about lava flows."

Hawaii County Civil Defense announced it had opened shelters because it had reports of people evacuating from along the coast on their own initiative.

The USGS warned residents who could be threatened by the lava flows to review their eruption preparations. Scientists had been on alert because of a recent spike in earthquakes at the summit of the volcano, which last erupted in 1984.

GOP's new committee leaders prepare blitz of investigations

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Republicans are promising aggressive oversight of the Biden administration once they assume the majority next year, with a particular focus on the business dealings of presidential son Hunter Biden, illegal immigration at the U.S.-Mexico border and the originations of COVID-19.

Republicans won't have enough votes to advance key legislative priorities if there is no Democratic buy-in, but their oversight of government agencies could put Democrats on the defensive and dampen support for the Biden administration going into the 2024 presidential elections.

Some of the lawmakers expected to lead those investigations once House Republicans select their new committee chairs:

JUDICIARY'S BIG ROLE

Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, is expected to serve as the next chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. Jordan helped form and then lead the ultra-conservative House Freedom Caucus and voted on Jan. 6, 2021, to object to counting Pennsylvania's electoral vote. President Donald Trump thought so highly of Jordan that he presented the congressman with the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

The Judiciary Committee handles oversight of the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security and issues such as crime, immigration and protection of civil liberties. It's typically one of the most partisan committees on Capitol Hill, yet Jordan's combative style stands out even there. The committee would be the place where any effort would begin to impeach a member of the Biden administration, as some Republicans have been proposing for Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

Jordan's inquiries to the administration in recent months make clear the committee will investigate the FBI's execution of a search warrant at Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence. He has also advocated for a wide-ranging look at the Biden administration's immigration policies and the origins of COVID-19.

"All those things need to be investigated just so you have the truth," Jordan told conservative activists last summer at a conference. "Plus that will frame up the 2024 race when I hope and I think President Trump is going to run again and we need to make sure that he wins."

OVERSIGHT'S LONG LIST

Rep. James Comer, R-Ky., is expected to serve as the next chairman of the House Oversight and Reform Committee and has made clear that investigating President Joe Biden's son Hunter will be one of his top priorities. The Republicans say their investigation of Hunter Biden's business dealings is to "determine whether these activities compromise U.S. national security and President Biden's ability to lead with impartiality."

Comer has also been laying the groundwork for investigating the situation on the U.S-Mexico border. He sent a letter to Mayorkas seeking an array of documents and communications pertaining to the administration's border policy. "We cannot endure another year of the Biden Administration's failed border policies," the letter said.

But that's just a slice the committee's focus.

"We're going to investigate between 40 and 50 different things," Comer said Sunday on NBC's "Meet The Press." "We have the capacity. We'll have 25 members on the committee, and we're going to have a staff close to 70. So we have the ability to investigate a lot of things."

The federal government's spending in response to COVID-19 will also be scrutinized.

"We believe that there have been hundreds of billions, if not trillions of dollars wasted over the past three years, so that spans two administrations, in the name of COVID.

"We want to have hearings on that. We want to try to determine what happened with the fraudulent unemployment insurance funds, the fraudulent PPP loan funds, some of this money that's being spent for state and local governments in the COVID stimulus money," Comer said.

AFGHANISTAN IN FOCUS

Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Texas, is expected to serve as the next chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which will be investigating the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. McCaul reiterated a request in mid-October for various documents and directed the State Department to preserve all records related to the chaotic withdrawal, which included the loss of 13 U.S. service members killed during a suicide bombing attack.

"The way it was done was such a disaster and such a disgrace to our veterans that served in Afghanistan. They deserve answers to the many questions we have," McCaul said on ABC's "This Week." He added: "Why wasn't there a plan to evacuate? How did it go so wrong?"

Arizona county refuses to certify election

PHOENIX (AP)—Republican officials in a rural Arizona county refused Monday to certify the 2022 election despite no evidence of anything wrong with the count, a decision that was quickly challenged in court by the state's top election official.

The refusal to certify by Cochise County in southeastern Arizona comes amid pressure from prominent Republicans to reject results showing Democrats winning top races.

Secretary of State Katie Hobbs, a Democrat who narrowly won the race for governor, asked a judge to order county officials to canvass the election, which she said is an obligation under Arizona law. Lawyers representing a Cochise County voter and a group of retirees filed a similar lawsuit Monday, the deadline for counties to approve the official tally of votes, known as the canvass.

The two Republican county supervisors delayed the canvass vote until Friday, when they want to hear once more about concerns over the certification of ballot tabulators, though election officials have repeatedly said the equipment is properly approved.

State Elections Director Kori Lorick wrote in a letter last week that Hobbs is required by law to approve the statewide canvass by next week and will have to exclude Cochise County's votes if they aren't received in time.

That would threaten to flip the victor in at least two close races — a U.S. House seat and state schools chief — from a Republican to a Democrat.

Hobbs' lawsuit asks the Cochise County Superior Court to order officials to certify by Thursday. Failing to certify would undermine the will of the county's voters "and sow further confusion and doubt about the integrity of Arizona's election system," lawyers for Hobbs wrote.

"The Board of Supervisors had all of the information they needed to certify this election and failed to uphold their responsibility for Cochise voters," Sophia Solis, a spokeswoman for Hobbs, said in an email.

World

WORLD BRIEFS

Biden, Macron ready to talk Ukraine, trade in state visit

WASHINGTON (AP)—French President Emmanuel Macron is headed to Washington for the first state visit of Joe Biden's presidency — a revival of diplomatic pageantry that had been put on hold because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Biden-Macron relationship had a choppy start. Macron briefly recalled France's ambassador to the United States last year after the White House announced a deal to sell nuclear submarines to Australia, undermining a contract for France to sell diesel-powered submarines.

But the relationship has turned around with Macron emerging as one of Biden's most forward-facing European allies in the Western response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This week's visit — it will include Oval Office talks, a glitzy dinner, a news conference and more — comes at a critical moment for both leaders.

The leaders have a long agenda for their Thursday meeting at the White House, including Iran's nuclear program, China's increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific and growing concerns about security and stability in Africa's Sahel region, according to U.S. and French officials. But front and center during their Oval Office meeting will be Russia's war in Ukraine, as both Biden and Macron work to maintain economic and military support for Kyiv as it tries to repel Russian forces.

China lockdown protests pause as police flood city streets

HONG KONG (AP)—With police out in force, there was no word of additional protests against strict government anti-pandemic measures Tuesday in Beijing, as temperatures fell well below freezing. Shanghai, Nanjing and other cities where online calls to gather had been issued were also reportedly quiet.

Rallies against China's unusually strict anti-virus measures spread to several cities over the weekend in the biggest show of opposition to the ruling Communist Party in decades. Authorities eased some regulations, apparently to try to quell public anger, but the government showed no sign of backing down on its larger coronavirus strategy, and analysts expect authorities to quickly silence the dissent.

Police were checking making random checks on phones at the People's Square subway station in Shanghai Monday evening, an eyewitness said. The person declined to give his name out of fear of retribution, as he was en route to a planned protest near the station, which he did not find.

In Hong Kong Monday, about 50 students from mainland China sang at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and some lit candles in a show of support for those in mainland cities who demonstrated against restrictions that have confined millions to their homes. Hiding their faces to avoid official retaliation, the students chanted, "No PCR tests but freedom!" and "Oppose dictatorship, don't be slaves!"

The gathering and a similar one elsewhere in Hong Kong were the biggest protests there in more than a year under rules imposed to crush a pro-democracy movement in the territory, which is Chinese but has a separate legal system from the mainland.

Iranian general acknowledges over 300 dead in unrest

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—An Iranian general on Monday acknowledged that more than 300 people have been killed in the unrest surrounding nationwide protests, giving the first official word on casualties in two months.

That estimate is considerably lower than the toll reported by Human Rights Activists in Iran, a U.S.-based group that has been closely tracking the protests since they erupted after the Sept. 16 death of a young woman being held by the country's morality police.

The activist group says 451 protesters and 60 security forces have been killed since the start of the unrest and that more than 18,000 people have been detained.

The protests were sparked by the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, who was detained for allegedly violating the Islamic Republic's strict dress code. They quickly escalated into calls for the overthrow of Iran's theocracy and pose one of the most serious challenges to the ruling clerics since the 1979 revolution that brought them to power.

Lull in Russian attacks against Ukraine energy, aid pledged

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Russia held back Monday from launching a new round of strikes that have been expected against power stations and other key infrastructure in Ukraine, as officials warned a lingering energy and water crisis from earlier attacks could prompt more evacuations from the capital.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba, hosting the largest delegation of top foreign officials since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a Russian invasion of Ukraine over nine months ago, insisted that better air defenses were needed from allies "to break this vicious cycle" of Russian air strikes followed by Ukrainian rebuilding of damaged infrastructure.

"Every time we will be restoring it, the Russians will be destroying it," he told counterparts from seven Baltic and Nordic countries.

The foreign ministers from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Iceland, Sweden, Norway and Finland pledged more military, economic and humanitarian aid as an energy crisis deepens and Ukrainian forces seek to move on with a counteroffensive against Russian troops.

Sweden said it had provided a 270-million-euro ($279 million) package of air defense systems, ammunition, all-terrain vehicles and personal winter gear for troops. Finland pledged to take in more Ukrainian refugees. In Washington, White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said the U.S. is working with partners and allies to provide energy and water replacement equipment to Ukraine

In Israel — which has straddled a fine political line in the conflict — Channel 13 reported that a high-level Ukrainian delegation recently visited to discuss an Israeli pledge to provide a system that detects incoming missiles. Israel's Defense Ministry declined comment.

With Grateful Hearts

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 1 39:23-24

†GABRIEL PEDRO DELA CRUZ CAMACHO

Lovingly known as Gabe/Bek

The sorrow and grief we endured with the untimely passing of a loving husband, father, grandfather, and brother †GABE pondered heavily on our hearts. Your love, words of comfort, unselfish support, kindness, and care, have greatly helped us bear the pain of losing someone so dear to us. Your presence with us during the past weeks for the daily morning masses and rosary and especially during the wake and funeral day, brought so much comfort and love to us in our time of deep grief.

We express our profound gratitude, yan sen Dangkulu na Si Yu'us Ma'ase to Reverend Father Isaac Ayuyu, Reverend Father Jesse Reyes, Reverend Father Rey Rosal, members of the clergy, and deacons for your all prayers, guidance, and services. To our rosary techas, Carlyn and Auntie Upe Hofschneider, thank you for leading us faithfully in our rosary. To the Thaddeus Family Choir, your beautiful music helped uplift our spirits and assured us that our beloved †Gabe is resting and safely home in God's paradise.

We are also grateful for all the doctors, nurses, and medical team, on Saipan, Guam, and Colorado who cared for our beloved †Gabe – thank you for the compassionate attention and professional care throughout the years and until his final days with us.

We are forever grateful for the gift of love and friendship from our dear relatives and friends, and we pray for God's endless love and mercy to bless us all every moment of our lives. May the wonderful Christmas story of our Savior's birth, and the message that it brings us of goodwill and peace on earth, help to make this Christmas season deeply meaningful for us all.

God Bless, Thank You, and Si Yu'us Ma'ase

Frances Sablan Tenorio Camacho, Children, and Grandchildren
The Children and Families of †Santiago Acosta and †Carmen Sablan Dela Cruz Camacho

Good Housekeeping

Brighten up your space with a citrus color palette

By CATHY HOBBS
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Citrus colors are bright, friendly and gender-neutral. They are also often the perfect way to add pops of color to neutral spaces. From lemon and lime to orange and their various tints, tones and shades, when looking for ways to perk up your decor, citrus colors may be the perfect blend.

Here are some top tips for incorporating citrus colors into your home.

DO'S

- Do use citrus colors as a springboard for your color story.
- Do use citrus as pops of color and accents in areas where you want to add visual interest.
- Do use citrus colors in gender-neutral spaces such as guest rooms and family rooms.
- Do use accessories such as artwork, toss pillows and throws to introduce citrus colors into aspace.
- Do use citrus colors in spaces that don't get much light as a way to mimic sunshine

SCOTT GABRIEL MORRIS/TNS
A green upholstery piece is paired with artwork to add an inspirational color moment.

SCOTT GABRIEL MORRIS/TNS
Bright and friendly, orange adds pops of rich color to this children's bedroom.

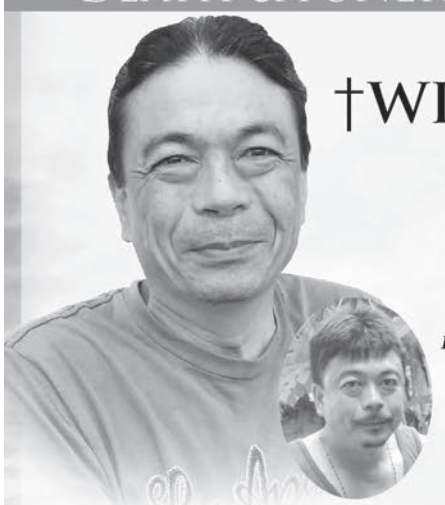
DON'TS

- Don't be afraid to blend citrus colors in the same space. For example, try pairing orange with yellow and green.
- Don't use overly bright foundation colors as a springboard to a citrus color palette. Using neutral tones such as cream, gray and black work best.
- Don't use dark shades in small rooms, as they will make small rooms feel even smaller.
- Don't blend too many tints, tones and shades of color in the same space.
- Don't overlook the opportunity to use greenery and florals as a way to introduce citrus colors into your home.

HANDOUT/TNS
A blend of primary citrus colors, orange yellow and green, come together in this guest bedroom.

SCOTT GABRIEL MORRIS/TNS
A neutral space is elevated through the use of pops of citrus orange.

DEATH & FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT



†WILLIAM BABAUTA SALAS, JR.

Lovingly known as "Bill"
Son of †William Sablan Salas
and †Delfina Camacho Babauta
Born on March 17, 1975, was called
to his eternal rest on November 21, 2022
Paternal Grandparents: †Jesus Taitano Salas
& †Fidelia Sablan Salas
Maternal Grandparents:
†Felix Lizama Babauta
& †Juana Camacho Babauta

His loving memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Daughter: Jada Cruz Salas
Brothers, Sisters, and In-laws:
Alvin Salas "Tiger" (Scarlett Shae)
Robert Salas/Victoria (Nathan Robert, Honeyka Isadel, Ha'ane Isabella, Hannah Isabel, Ha'leiya Delia Ann)
Joyce Aquiningoc/Katherine (Vincent Anthony, Jovilyn Angel, Steven Wiliam, Raymond Jr.)
Karen Oco/Nelson Aguilar (Nelena Del, Karl Emily, Kourtney Deon, Nevaeh Angel)
Kurt Oco/Keesha (Brycyn Wes)

He will be greatly missed by numerous Uncles, Aunties, Nieces, Nephews, family, and friends.
Funeral services will be held on Saturday, December 3, 2022. Our beloved †William will be escorted from Borja Funeral Home to San Roque Church at 7:30 am followed by Responso Service, Holy Rosary, viewing, and last respects. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:00 am, followed by interment service at the San Roque Cemetery where he will be laid to rest.

Your thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.

Thank you, si Yu'us Ma'ase, Ghilisow yan Maraming Salamat po.

Ginen I Familia

Life & Style

More than 150 agents back striking HarperCollins workers

NEW YORK (AP)—More than 150 literary agents, whose clients include Danielle Jackson, V.E. Schwab and L.A. Chandlar, have signed an open letter to HarperCollins vowing to "omit" the publisher from upcoming book submissions until it reaches an agreement with striking employees.

Around 250 entry- and mid-level staff members, from publicists to editorial assistants, have been on strike since Nov. 10, with the two sides differing over wages, workforce diversity and other issues that have become increasingly prominent across the industry. No new talks are scheduled.

"While many consider publishing to be a labor of love, we agents know how quickly that labor can lead to burnout, tension, missed opportunities for advancement, and mistakes," the letter reads in part.

"This generation of rising publishing professionals must contend with student loan debt, the rising cost of living, and the barriers inherent in working long hours without adequate compensation. These employees, many of whom bring with them the diverse viewpoints our industry lacks, have been essential to the production of the books we are so proud of."

Agents endorsing the letter come from Janklow & Nesbit Associates, Aevitas Creative Management, Root Literary and other firms. The letter was organized by Chelsea Hensley of the KT Literary Agency, who noted that the effort comes during a traditionally slow time of year for deal making.

"I wanted them (HarperCollins) to know that even if they don't think they're seeing the effects of the strike now, they'll definitely be seeing it come January, which is when agents will have the most new projects to share," Hensley told The Associated Press.

HarperCollins is the only major New York publisher with a union; striking employees are members of Local 2110 of the United Auto Workers. A spokesperson for the publisher did not immediately return a message seeking comment.

"HarperCollins has agreed to a number of proposals that the United Auto Workers Union is seeking to include in a new contract," according to a statement released Monday by the publisher. We are disappointed an agreement has not been reached and will continue to negotiate in good faith."

HBO to air Nancy Pelosi doc shot by daughter Alexandra

Pelosi

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A documentary on House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's life and groundbreaking political career, shot and edited by her daughter, will debut on HBO next month.

Alexandra Pelosi's "Pelosi in the House" will premiere Dec. 13 and will include footage shot during the Jan. 6 insurrection. Some of that footage, including moments when Nancy Pelos i was helping direct the government's response as the U.S. Capitol was under attack, has been seen as part of a House investigation.

The film will arrive three weeks before Pelosi's tenure as House speaker ends and Republicans resume control over the House of Representatives. Pelosi has said she will not seek a leadership post, ending a two-decade run of helping steer the Democrats' agenda in Congress.

HBO says the documentary will use footage shot over three decades to chart Pelosi's career including her election to Congress in 1987 and her ascension to House speaker in 2007, becoming the first woman to lead the chamber. The documentary also includes video of Pelosi at home and working during pivotal moments of her career.

HBO did not say how much the documentary would feature Paul Pelosi, who has been married to Nancy Pelosi for 59 years. The wealthy investor is recovering from a brutal hammer attack by an intruder who broke into their San Francisco home in October calling out "Where's Nancy," the latest in a line of threatening behavior directed at her.

Alexandra Pelosi is an Emmy-nominated documentary filmmaker who was with her mother filming during the Jan. 6 insurrection. She's specialized in political documentaries, earning four Emmy nominations for her 2002 film "Journeys with George" about George W. Bush's 2000 presidential campaign.

Exploring a memory: Designer re-creates a dress for Diana

AP

British designer Elizabeth Emanuel stands beside a replica of an evening gown she designed for the then Lady Diana Spencer to wear at a Buckingham Palace party a few days before her marriage to Prince Charles in 1981, in London, Friday, Nov. 18, 2022.

LONDON (AP)—This is a dress with a story, and Elizabeth Emanuel wants to tell it.

Shocking pink with a plunging, ruffled neckline and body-hugging shape, the gown was designed by Emanuel for Lady Diana Spencer to wear at a Buckingham Palace party a few days before her marriage to Prince Charles in 1981. It was a visual coming-out event for the future princess, until then largely known for her conservative sweater-and-pearls look.

"This was definitely not a wallflower dress," said Emanuel, who also co-designed Diana's wedding gown. "This was a dress to be seen in and celebrated."

It was also soon forgotten. In an era before smartphones put a camera in everyone's pocket and social media made private events public, the dress was mostly seen by the party guests, including Queen Elizabeth II, Princess Grace and Nancy Reagan, but no one else. Emanuel doesn't know where it is, or even if it still exists.

So she has re-created it, out of bolts of shiny, satin taffeta cut and stitched to match the dramatic sketches she made more than 40 years ago.

Acting on an idea that took shape during Britain's long coronavirus lockdowns, she did it for herself, for her archive. But also because she wanted to show another side of Diana, who Emanuel believes has been misrepresented by "The Crown," the popular Netflix series that has brought the story of the princess and her ill-fated marriage to a new generation.

A fan of the series' first three seasons, Emanuel said she found it hard to watch the last two because of the way Diana was depicted.

Creating a bespoke dress is a long process, requiring multiple fittings that give client and dressmaker lots of time to talk. And throughout the hours they spent together, Diana came across as a happy, vibrant young woman, not the shrinking girl "The Crown" portrays as being buffeted by events beyond her control, Emanuel said.

Wife seeks path forward after decades of abuse

DEAR ABBY: My husband of 30 years has always made me feel like I wasn't good enough for him. He would flirt with other women and say things to me about an ex-girlfriend he broke up with before marrying his first wife. (I caught him private messaging her.) He has told me four different times that we should separate. The first three times, I cried about it. The last time he said it, I told him never to say that to me again.

I have always tried my best to be a good wife to him. He's verbally abusive most of the time. When I see him coming home from work, my stomach ties in knots because I don't know what kind of mood he's in. He can be good at times, but it's not that often. I'm going to be 50 and I'm not sure if I want to live like this the rest of my life. Help, please.

UNHAPPY IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR UNHAPPY: It's important you recognize that you are married to an emotional abuser. He maintains his power in your relationship by eroding your sense of self-esteem. Discuss with a licensed mental health professional the treatment you have tolerated for the last 30 years and your desire to rebuild your shattered self-esteem. It may take time to accomplish, but it will be money well spent.

At some point you may ask your husband to join you, but don't expect him to automatically agree. Once you feel better about yourself, you can then make a well-thought-out decision about whether to continue being married to him.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 56-year-old man who has been with a great guy, age 50, for 20 years. We were married two years ago. He's a professor; I'm a clinician. We have spent the last 20 years building a beautiful life advancing our careers, traveling to 80 countries, wining and dining in the best places in the world and cultivating long-lasting friendships with people all over the planet.

Five years ago, I felt a sense of emptiness in spite of our happiness and talked to him about children. He was adamantly opposed. I let it go, but now that emptiness is tearing me up inside. I am at the point of giving up my life with him to have a child on my own via adoption or IVF with a surrogate. His biggest issue is how his comfortable life will be changed forever. My issue is getting those last few drops of unfulfilled happiness before it's too late. Please advise.

HAPPY BUT INCOMPLETE

DEAR H.B.I.: If your husband is steadfast that he doesn't want his lifestyle to change, he may not be taking into account that with you out of the picture, it will change regardless. And it isn't unheard of that someone who is fearful of the responsibility of raising a child can have a change of heart and fall in love with the little person after meeting him or her. If ever a couple could use marital counseling, it's the two of you to help you determine whether a compromise can be reached.

■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

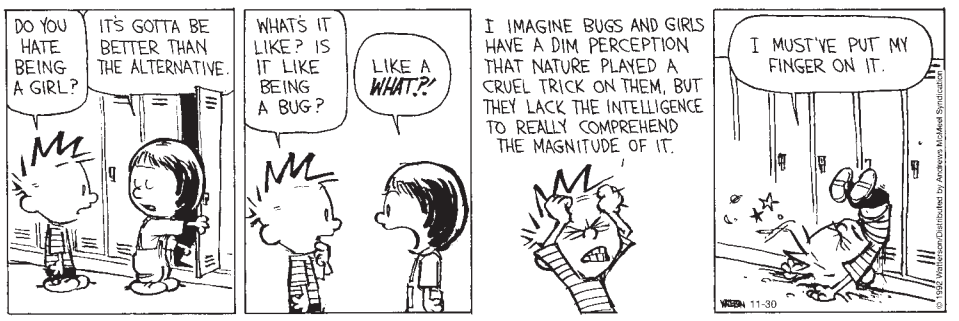
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

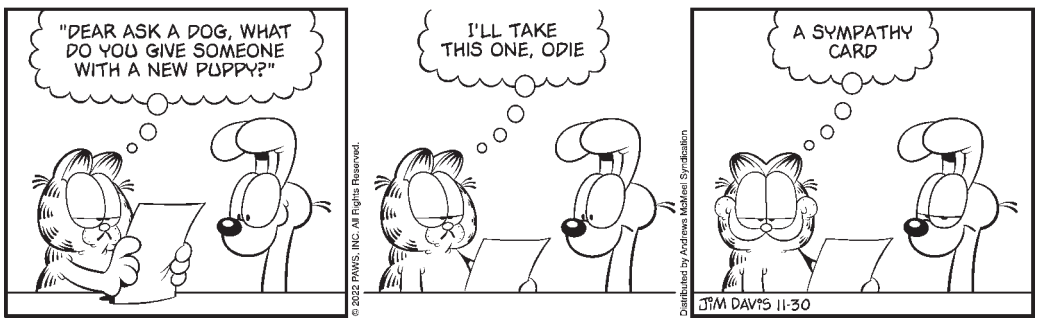
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


DO YOU HATE BEING A GIRL?
IT'S GOTTA BE BETTER THAN THE ALTERNATIVE.
WHAT'S IT LIKE? IS IT LIKE BEING A BUG?
LIKE A WHAT?!
I IMAGINE BUGS AND GIRLS HAVE A DIM PERCEPTION THAT NATURE PLAYED A CRUEL TRICK ON THEM, BUT THEY LACK THE INTELLIGENCE TO REALLY COMPREHEND THE MAGNITUDE OF IT.
I MUST'VE PUT MY FINGER ON IT.
© 1992 Watterson/Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication
WATTERSON 11-30

Garfield®

By Jim Davis


"DEAR ASK A DOG, WHAT DO YOU GIVE SOMEONE WITH A NEW PUPPY?"
I'LL TAKE THIS ONE, ODIE
A SYMPATHY CARD
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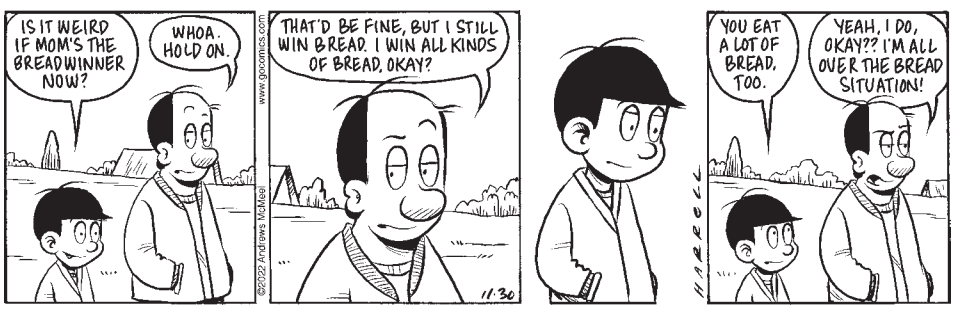
Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication
JIM DAVIS 11-30

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


IS IT WEIRD IF MOM'S THE BREADWINNER NOW?
WHOA. HOLD ON.
THAT'D BE FINE, BUT I STILL WIN BREAD. I WIN ALL KINDS OF BREAD, OKAY?
YOU EAT A LOT OF BREAD, TOO.
YEAH, I DO, OKAY?? I'M ALL OVER THE BREAD SITUATION!
©2022 Andrews McMeel
www.gocomics.com
11-30

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO TONIGHT?
I'M GOING TO A HOLIDAY WORK PARTY AT THE COSTCO.
ISN'T THAT JUST FOR EMPLOYEES?
DO YOU KNOW HOW LONG I'VE BEEN WORKING THE "SELF-CHECKOUT" LANE?
©2022 Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication www.gocomics.com
11-30

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Dean's list stat
4 Jokester
7 Satan's purchase
8 Bolshevik leader
10 Corp. shake-up
11 Aerie builders
13 Fruit-filled pastries
16 Oz., lb., et al.
17 Nibbles
18 Use a henna rinse
19 Coffee vessels
20 Ancient Brit
21 Raw-boned one
23 Hit the books
25 Sagan or Sandburg
26 Empty truck's weight
27 Census stat
28 Actress Linney
30 Luau bowlful
33 Some California wines
36 Bathroom bowl
37 Coffee add-in
38 Remains
39 Deserve
40 Frozen water
41 Map lines (Abbr.)

DOWN

1 Gummy substances
2 Knitting stitch
3 Math course
4 "— the Champions"
5 Cattle breed
6 Coat with gold
7 Aug. follower
8 Riga residents
9 Required
10 Cold and damp
12 In a sneaky way
14 Go caroling
15 Collection
19 Internet address
20 Pool stick
21 Bob of "Full House"
22 Beliefs
23 Poet Teasdale
24 Stupors
25 Lincoln or Ford
26 Clumps of grass
28 Pale purple
29 In the blink of —
30 Equals
31 "The Good Earth" heroine
32 Belief
34 Tubular pasta
35 "Phooey!"

Solution time: 23 mins.

W	O	R	E		D	S	T		D	A	I	S
A	J	A	X		I	K	E		O	R	S	O
R	A	G	E		D	I	A	G	O	N	A	L
D	I	A	M	O	N	D		A	W	O	K	E
			P	O	T		F	L	O			
N	E	A	T	O		D	I	A	P	E	R	S
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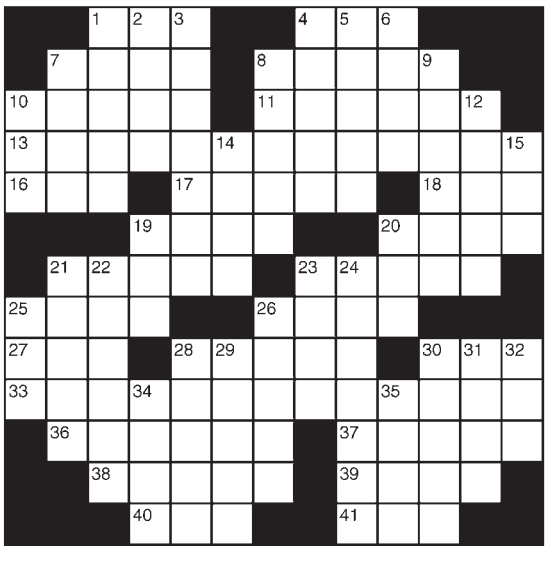
O	R	O	N	O		D	I	A	L	I	N	G
D	I	A	T	O	N	I	C		I	B	A	R
A	C	H	E		I	N	K		B	E	L	A
Y	O	U	R		B	A	S		S	T	A	Y

Yesterday's answer 11-30



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kaley Cuoco, 37; Elisha Cuthbert, 40; Ben Stiller, 57; Billy Idol, 67.

Happy Birthday: Give yourself plenty of time to assess situations before you judge others or decide to make a move that will affect your lifestyle and relationships with friends, relatives and peers. Be aware of how others feel, and communicate openly and honestly to avoid misunderstandings. Intervene if anyone tries to manipulate or force you into a compromising position. Call the shots. Your numbers are 8, 15, 21, 26, 33, 38, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Pay attention to your financial well-being, keeping up with technology or what's new in your industry. Abide by the rules and regulations. How you conduct business or handle your responsibilities will be the turning point to your success. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You may want change, but if someone has a legitimate reason to sit tight and wait for a better opportunity, listen. Put your energy into something that will improve your skills and make you stand out among your peers. Avoid emotional spending. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Stay focused on what's important to you, and refuse to let outside influences disrupt your plans. Something you discover or learn will change the way you deal with personal information and institutions. Preparation will make a difference. Leave nothing to chance. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Don't share too much information with your colleagues or superiors. By gathering facts and familiarizing yourself with who is doing what, you will control what transpires. Don't trust anyone to take care of your responsibilities. Protect your position. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Keep your money and important documents in a safe place. Keep a watchful eye over what others choose to do, and it will give insight into the best way for you to counter any negativity that comes your way. Don't overspend on entertainment. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Take it easy. If you disrupt your home or relationships to bring about an unwanted change, you will miss out on the chance to implement a worthwhile plan. Step outside your comfort zone if it helps drum up support. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* You'll have plenty to contribute, so don't hold back. It's up to you to fine-tune whatever you oversee if you want things to run smoothly. Acknowledge your target and do whatever it takes to reach your destination on time. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* You've got the right idea, but your timing is off. Rethink the framework of your plan, and you'll either speed up or slow down to meet your mark appropriately. Ask questions and schedule activities conveniently to ensure success. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Rein in emotions and replace them with common sense to ensure you avoid a path paved with good intentions but little substance. Get the facts before you agree to something that can hurt your reputation or personal relationships. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Look at the possibilities, and you'll figure out a new way to use the skills and services you have honed over the years. Exploring something you enjoy doing will help you find a way to incorporate it into your daily routine. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Expect to face opposition. Keep your thoughts and plans to yourself until you have everything ready to launch. The element of surprise will be to your advantage and help engage someone with vision to aid you. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Choose to remain calm and avoid conversations with opinionated individuals looking for a fight. Put your energy where it counts and spend your time doing what you do best. You will positively impact those you help. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, colorful and original. You are optimistic and forceful.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		1	9	8				
3			1	7	2			
6		8				2		
7	1		6	9			8	
	6	5		4		7		1
2	9		7	1			3	
9		7				6		
1			4	3	7			
		2	5	6				

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/30

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

9	8	6	4	5	7	1	3	2
5	3	1	6	8	2	9	4	7
7	2	4	3	1	9	5	6	8
8	4	9	7	3	6	2	5	1
6	1	5	2	9	8	4	7	3
3	7	2	1	4	5	8	9	6
2	5	3	8	7	4	6	1	9
4	6	7	9	2	1	3	8	5
1	9	8	5	6	3	7	2	4

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

NYC SUBWAY STATIONS **Solution: 6 letters**

B	C	N	O	T	G	N	I	X	E	L	P	L	H	A
Y	R	E	S	S	E	R	Ⓟ	X	E	E	A	Y	E	V
S	A	O	N	N	T	Ⓐ	A	L	N	N	F	A	R	E
N	M	N	O	T	Ⓡ	E	M	N	A	B	F	W	A	N
E	A	I	K	Ⓚ	R	E	K	C	D	T	I	D	L	U
E	N	S	D	E	L	A	N	C	E	Y	F	A	D	E
U	H	R	T	R	E	Y	L	I	I	I	T	O	E	S
Q	A	G	A	R	D	E	N	D	L	T	H	R	R	E
M	T	H	G	R	E	E	N	R	D	K	A	B	X	M
Y	T	S	T	A	T	E	N	A	E	U	N	X	N	I
R	A	B	R	Y	A	N	T	Y	Q	M	O	A	O	T
T	N	I	A	D	N	A	L	S	I	N	I	A	R	T
L	D	G	D	D	R	O	F	D	E	B	E	R	B	F
E	S	R	E	B	M	U	N	L	F	U	L	T	O	N
R	E	F	S	N	A	R	T	E	R	M	I	N	A	L

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Yesterday's Answer: Evergreen

Purchase the NEW **Treasury 50** in time for the holidays at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Brazil advances at World Cup with 1-0 win over Switzerland

DOHA, Qatar (AP)—Struggling and unconvincing without Neymar on the field, Brazil still played well enough to secure a spot in the next round of the World Cup.

The five-time champions overcame the absence of their injured star to beat Switzerland 1-0 with a late goal Monday and make it to the round of 16 with a match to spare in Group G.

"Of course we miss a player like Neymar," Brazil coach Tite said. "The team loses a lot without him. But we also have other players who can get the job done, as we saw it today."

Casemiro got the only goal in the 83rd minute of a game in which Brazil had difficulties creating scoring chances without its main playmaker. The defensive midfielder scored with a one-timer into the far corner, using the outside of his right foot for a shot that deflected slightly off defender Manuel Akanji.

"We knew that it wasn't going to be easy. We had to be patient," Casemiro said. "Out first objective was to advance and we achieved that."

Neymar stayed at the team's hotel to treat a right ankle injury sustained in the opener in Qatar. He posted an Instagram story showing him watching the match on television while undergoing treatment on his foot.

"Casemiro has been the best defensive midfielder in the world for a long time," Neymar wrote on Twitter.

Team doctors have not yet given a timetable for Neymar's return — or said if he will return at all. Vinícius Júnior said Neymar also had a fever on Monday, though the team had not officially said anything about it.

"We know that Neymar is a great player and that he makes a difference," Brazil defender Marquinhos said. "In difficult moments he takes on the responsibility and creates the opportunities, but we showed once again that we have quality players to make up for his absence."

The win gave Brazil six points from two matches, leaving Switzerland with three. Serbia and Cameroon, which drew 3-3 earlier Monday, have one point each.

Switzerland, which had no attempts on target, needs a win in the last match against Serbia to guarantee its spot in the next stage. A draw may be enough depending on the match between Brazil and Cameroon.

The result extended Brazil's unbeaten run in the group stage to 17 matches, with 14 wins and three draws. It has lost only one of its last 29 group games, with the last defeat coming against Norway in 1998 in France.

AP

Brazil's Casemiro celebrates after scoring his side's opening goal during the World Cup group G soccer match between Brazil and Switzerland, at the Stadium 974 in Doha, Qatar, Monday, Nov. 28, 2022.

Switzerland had lost only two of its last 13 group matches at the World Cup.

"I can't really blame the team, it did a good job for quite some time," Switzerland coach Murat Yakin said through a translator. "I don't think it's a disappointment. We have a lot of good takeaways here. The next game is something we have control over."

It was an even match early on, with both teams trying to control the game but not creating many significant chances. Without Neymar, Brazil struggled to get near Switzerland's area until Casemiro's goal. The assists came from Vinícius Junios and Rodrygo, the Real Madrid players who until recent had Casemiro as their teammate. Casemiro now plays for Manchester United.

Portugal 2, Uruguay 0

In Lusail, Qatar, Cristiano Ronaldo wheeled away in celebration, acting as though he had scored once again at the World Cup.

Not this time.

Instead, it was Bruno Fernandes eventually credited with the goal that set up Portugal's 2-0 win over Uruguay on Monday, advancing the team into the last 16.

Fernandes curled in a cross from the left that barely went over the head of the leaping Ronaldo and bounced into the far corner of the net in the 54th minute to give Portugal a 1-0 lead.

A grinning Ronaldo threw his arms in the air, suggesting he got the final touch, and was embracing Fernandes as multiple close-up replays were being shown on the big screens in Lusail Stadium.

Alas for Ronaldo, the goal wound up being awarded to Fernandes, who added a second from the penalty spot in stoppage time after a handball by Jose Maria Gimenez as he slid in to challenge the Manchester United playmaker.

"I don't really think it matters who scored," Fernandes said about the first goal. "The feeling at the time was that he (Ronaldo) touched the ball — I was crossing it to him — but what's important was we moved into the next round and beat a very big opponent."

Fernandes was denied a hat trick with virtually the last kick of the game, his shot from outside the area hitting the post and bouncing wide.

Portugal, which opened with a 3-2 win over Ghana, became the third team to reach the last 16 after France and Brazil.

Uruguay has one point from two matches and needs to beat Ghana on Friday to stand a chance of advancing. The 2010 semifinalists have yet to score a goal at this tournament, with coach Diego Alonso even putting 35-year-old striker Luis Suarez on the bench in search of the right combination up front.

Portugal has no such worries. The team has scored five goals in two games and Fernandes has had a hand in four of them as he dictates play in his role as the team's No. 10.

Cameroon 3, Serbia 3

In Al Wakrah, Qatar, Cameroon staged an impressive comeback in a 3-3 draw against Serbia at the World Cup despite replacing its goalkeeper at the last minute.

Andre Onana, who plays for Italian club Inter Milan, wasn't in Cameroon's lineup or even at the stadium to watch the Group G match.

Coach Rigobert Song said he dropped his starting goalkeeper for "disciplinary reasons," but didn't give any specifics.

"In a group you need to respect the rules that apply to everybody, and I prefer to ensure that the team takes precedence over individuals," Song said. "If you can't fit in with what's required to be part of a squad, then I do think that you need to step up to the plate and accept responsibility for that."

Song replaced Onana with Devis Epassy, who made only his sixth international appearance.

"I took a risk, I realize that," Song said. "Maybe we're going to have to explain what happened later."

Song said Onana hasn't been kicked out of the squad and didn't rule him out of Cameroon's last group stage match against Brazil on Friday.

"For the time being I've asked him to wait and we'll see if he's going to stay with us," Song said. "It's up to him as well to a certain extent. He's going to have to agree to respect the rules to perhaps come into the squad."

Onana, who has 34 international caps made no comment on the decision except posting the starting lineup, with his notable absence, on Instagram.

Epassy said he found out Sunday night he would replace Onana, who offered him encouragement.

"We don't have any problem together," Epassy said. "It's my role to be ready."

Cameroon was down 3-1 but second-half substitute Vincent Aboubakar turned the game with a goal and an assist.

He lobbed Serbia goalkeeper Vanja Milinkovic-Savic in the 64th minute to score his 34th goal for the Indomitable Lions, and set up striker Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting two minutes later for the equalizer.

"The lion roared today," Aboubakar said. "I dedicate this result to the squad, and to the people of Cameroon."

The thrilling draw was the first game at the World Cup in Qatar in which both teams gave up a lead.

But the result suited neither side.

They each have one point after two Group G matches, two points behind Switzerland after the Swiss lost 1-0 to Brazil later Monday. The win sent the record five-time World Cup champions into the last 16 with a match to spare.

Ghana 3, South Korea 2

In Al Rayyan, Qatar, Mohammed Kudus said there wasn't much difference between the way Ghana played in its opening World Cup match against Portugal or its second game against South Korea.

Except the result, of course.

Kudus scored twice, including the go-ahead goal after the South Koreans evened the match in the second half, and Ghana staved off elimination with a 3-2 victory on Monday.

Mohammed Salisu also scored for the Black Stars, who were disappointed after a close 3-2 opening loss to Cristiano Ronaldo and Portugal and were in need of points against South Korea for a chance to reach the knockout round in Qatar.

"I think the game against Portugal was one of the best games you can have. The energy and the commitment from the whole team was good. So we approached this game the same way," Kudus said. "We have the same mentality game after game after game, so we are going in the same direction with the same energy no matter who we play."

Down 2-0, Cho Gue-sung scored both of South Korea's goals about three minutes apart early in the second half to even the game at 2-2.

But Kudus' low left-footed goal in the 68th minute sailed out of the reach of goalkeeper Kim Seung-gyu to give the Black Stars back the lead. Ghana goalkeeper Lawrence Ati-Zigi preserved the victory with a leaping save off Cho's attempt in stoppage time.

"We conceded goals a bit early in the game, and that forced us to play a chasing-style game that wasn't easy. After the first half, we vowed to keep trying until the end," Cho said. "We never gave up and eventually caught up (to them), but the last goal we conceded was regrettable. We kept pounding for an equalizer but couldn't break through."

South Korea forward Son Heung-min remained without a goal in Qatar. The Tottenham forward wore a mask to protect a broken left eye socket he sustained in a Champions League game against Marseille earlier this month.

South Korea coach Paulo Bento was handed a red card in the moments following the match after a heated exchange with English referee Anthony Taylor. The Portuguese coach was furious when South Korea won a corner at the end of 10 minutes of stoppage time but the whistle was blown before it could be taken.

The red card means that Bento will not be on the sideline for South Korea's final match against Portugal on Friday.

Assistant coach Sergio Costa said "the result at the end was totally unfair" and added that he did not hear Bento say anything "inappropriate."

South Korea played to a 0-0 draw in its opener with Uruguay. The team was making its sixth straight World Cup appearance.

But now the South Koreans are in danger of elimination. Costa suggested the anger of Bento would unite the team.

"Count on us for the next match," he said.

Ghana became the third African nation to make it to the World Cup quarterfinals at the 2010 tournament. Black Stars captain Andre Ayew was also on that squad. No African team has reached the World Cup semifinals.

Known for its controlled possession, South Korea dominated the first 20 minutes. Ghana broke through in the 24th when Salisu scored in a scramble in front of the net off a free kick. After a spirited celebration encircled by his teammates, Salisu nervously crouched on the field while the goal was confirmed by video review.

Porzingis scores 41, Towns hurt as Wizards beat T-Wolves

WASHINGTON (AP)—Kristaps Porzingis scored a career-high 41 points, including 29 in the first half, and the Washington Wizards beat Minnesota 142-127 on Monday after Timberwolves star Karl-Anthony-Towns was helped off the court in the third quarter with a right leg injury.

Towns grabbed at his leg and went down near midcourt. He was helped off without putting weight on the leg, and the team announced that he had a right calf strain.

Porzingis made all six of his 3-pointers in the first half. Washington shot 57% from the field for the game.

Kyle Kuzma scored 23 points for the Wizards and Bradley Beal added 22.

Anthony Edwards led the Timberwolves with 29 points.

Nets 109, Magic 102

In New York, Kevin Durant scored a season-high 45 points and Brooklyn beat Orlando to get back to .500.

Durant shot 19 of 24 from the field and added seven rebounds and five assists, playing 39 minutes on the second night of back-to-back games.

Kyrie Irving added 20 points and Nic Claxton had 17 points and 13 rebounds for the Nets (11-11), who had to play the second half without Ben Simmons after he was bothered by knee soreness.

Paolo Banchero and Bol Bol each scored 24 points and Franz Wagner chipped in 21 for the Magic, who have lost five straight games and seven of their last eight.

76ers 104, Hawks 101

In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid sank the go-ahead 14-footer with 18.6 seconds left and scored 30 points in his return from a sprained left foot as Philadelphia beat Atlanta.

Embiid scored seven points in the final minute as the 76ers rallied. He had missed the previous four games with a sprained left foot.

Tobias Harris scored 24 points and Shake Milton had 21 for the Sixers.

Young and De'Andre Hunter led the Hawks with 18 points apiece.

Celtics 140, Hornets 105

In Boston, Jayson Tatum scored 35 points, Marcus Smart had 22 points and a career-high 15 assists, and Boston cruised past Charlotte.

The Celtics led by 27 points in the first quarter. It was the ninth straight win at home and the 13th in 14 games for the reigning Eastern Conference champions, who have the best record in the NBA.

Malcolm Brogdon had 21 points, six assists and five rebounds for Boston.

Jalen McDaniels scored 24 points and Kelly Oubre Jr. had 22 for the Hornets, who lost for the 12th time in 15 games.

Suns 122, Kings 117

In Sacramento, Calif., Devin Booker had 44 points, eight rebounds and six steals and Phoenix extended its winning streak to five.

Sacramento has lost three straight after a seven-game win streak.

Deandre Ayton added 17 points and 12 rebounds for his ninth double-double of the season for Phoenix, which has won six of seven.

Malik Monk scored 30 points for the Kings, his fourth game over 20 points this season. Domantas Sabonis finished with 17 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds.

AP

Washington Wizards center Kristaps Porzingis (6) and forward Kyle Kuzma (33) smile during a timeout in the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Minnesota Timberwolves, Monday, Nov. 28, 2022, in Washington.

Raptors 100, Cavaliers 88

In Toronto, Pascal Siakam had 18 points and 11 rebounds in his return from injury, O.G. Anunoby scored 20 and Toronto beat Cleveland.

Gary Trent Jr. scored 14 points, Fred VanVleet had 13 and Scottie Barnes 11 as the Raptors improved to 8-2 at home.

Siakam returned after missing 10 games because of a strained right adductor. Toronto went 5-5 in his absence.

Evan Mobley had 18 points and 15 rebounds and Darius Garland added 18 points and 10 assists, but the Cavaliers lost to Toronto for the second time.

Pelicans 105, Thunder 101

In New Orleans, Zion Williamson scored 23 points, matched his career high with eight assists and converted a go-ahead three-point play with 44 seconds left to lift short-handed New Orleans past Oklahoma City.

With the Pelicans playing without Brandon Ingram and C.J. McCollum, Williamson also had eight rebounds and three blocked shots. Trey Murphy III scored 20 points for the Pelicans.

The Pelicans slowed down Shai Gilgeous-Alexander from the floor, but the penetrating guard still scored 31 points on 7-of-21 shooting. He did most of his damage from the foul line, going 16 of 18.

Oklahoma City took a 101-100 lead on Jeremiah Robinson-Earl's 3-pointer with 51 seconds left, but New Orleans scored the final five points.

Nuggets 129, Rockets 113

In Denver, Nikola Jokic had 32 points and 12 rebounds, Jamal Murray scored a season-high 31 and Denver beat Houston.

The win was the Nuggets' third in a row following a home loss last Tuesday against lowly Detroit. Jokic and Murray combined to shoot 64.7% from the field.

Alperen Sengun led five Rockets in double figures with 18 points. Houston (5-15) has the worst record in the Western Conference, but had won three of its previous five games.

Bulls 114, Jazz 107

In Salt Lake City, DeMar DeRozan had 26 points and six assists to lead Chicago past Utah.

Zach LaVine added 20 points, six rebounds, and five assists for the Bulls. Nikola Vucevic finished with 16 points and 10 rebounds.

Lauri Markkanen scored 32 points for the Jazz. Kelly Olynyk added 23 points and Collin Sexton chipped in 17. Utah lost its fifth straight.

Pacers 116, Lakers 115

In Los Angelesm rookie Andrew Nembhard hit a 3-pointer at the buzzer, and the Indiana Pacers rallied from a 17-point deficit in the fourth quarter for a stunning 116-115 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Monday night.

Tyrese Haliburton scored 24 points and hit a tying layup with 39 seconds left for the Pacers, who trailed 101-84 early in the fourth. LeBron James hit a one-handed floater with 20.9 seconds left, and Myles Turner missed an ensuing 3-point attempt for Indiana—but Haliburton got the rebound and found Nembhard alone on the perimeter, where the Canadian second-round pick from Gonzaga drilled his fourth 3-pointer of the night.

Snell runs for go-ahead TD, Steelers hold off Colts, 24-17

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Benny Snell Jr. kept waiting for his first carry of the season.

When he finally got the chance, in Week 12 during prime time, Snell showed everyone what he could do.

He ran for 62 yards, scored the go-ahead touchdown with 9:55 left and then watched as his Pittsburgh Steelers teammates fended off a last-minute comeback bid to beat the Indianapolis Colts 24-17 on Monday night.

"We go to any guy wearing a helmet," Steelers coach Mike Tomlin said. "He was on the punt team coming in and sometimes you bet battlefield promoted."

The Steelers (4-7) didn't have much of a choice after Najee Harris limped off the field in the first half. Harris was ruled out with an abdominal injury, and Snell took over.

He carried 12 times, produced his highest rushing total since an 84-yard game on Dec. 21, 2020, and with the Steelers trailing 17-16 and hundreds or thousands of Terrible Towels waving on third-and-goal, Snell found an open lane to the end zone. Kenny Pickett threw to George Pickens for the 2-point conversion to make it 24-17.

Pittsburgh's eighth straight win in this lopsided series allowed the Steelers to match San Francisco for the most Monday night victories in league history (52). The 49ers had edged in front last week when they beat Arizona in Mexico City.

Matt Ryan drove the Colts (4-7-1) into position to score, but Indy let a minute run off the clock in a span of three plays in Steelers territory, finally using its first timeout on fourth down with 30 seconds remaining. Ryan then threw incomplete to Parris Campbell on fourth-and-3 from the Steelers 26 and Indy fell to 1-2 under interim coach Jeff Saturday.

"I thought we had plenty of time," said Saturday, who never coached at the pro or college level before owner Jim Irsay hired him to replace Frank Reich. "We had plenty of timeouts, so I wasn't too concerned. This wasn't a press for time, we just didn't make enough plays."

It was the Colts' first home Monday night game since September 2015 and the first half was a complete dud.

Pittsburgh drove into Indy territory on all five possessions and produced three field goals and Harris' 6-yard TD run to take a 16-3 lead. Colts players jogged to the locker room to a chorus of boos.

But when rookie Dallis Flowers returned the opening kickoff of the second half 90 yards, the atmosphere changed.

Four plays later, Jonathan Taylor scored on a 2-yard run to cut the deficit to 16-10. The Colts drove to the Steelers 1-yard line on their next possession, but Ryan and Taylor botched a handoff and Pittsburgh recovered.

Indy then forced a three-and-out and Ryan threw a 6-yard TD pass to Michael Pittman to give the Colts a 17-16 lead late in the third quarter.

It didn't last long. Snell, who played in college at nearby Kentucky, answered with the short TD run.

"He has an edge, he runs angry," said Pickett, Pittsburgh's rookie QB who finished 20 of 28 for 174 yards and no turnovers. "I love the juice he brings. He's a detailed guy who does his job very well."

INJURY UPDATE

Tomlin said he was uncertain about Harris' diagnosis. Harris had 10 carries for 35 yards before departing. Cornerback Levi Wallace also left the game late with an undisclosed injury.

"We respect any decisions made around medical, but I don't know where the decision came from," Tomlin said about Wallace's departure.

Indy lost Pro Bowl cornerback Kenny Moore II with an injured shin. His replacement, Tony Brown, was defending Pickens on the 2-point conversion.

STAT PACK

Steelers: Pickett joined Terry Bradshaw and Bubby Brister as the only rookies to start for the Steelers on a Monday night. ... Pickens caught three passes for 57 yards and Diontae Johnson had five receptions for 49 yards. ... The Steelers had 18 total yards in the third quarter.

Colts: Ryan threw for 199 yards with a touchdown and an interception after going 5 of 13 with 36 yards and compiling a 14.6 rating in the first half. ... Taylor ran 20 times for 86 yards and scored in his third straight game. ... Indy had zero total yards in the first quarter.

MENTAL HEALTH PUSH

Irsay used the nationally televised game to highlight his mental health awareness campaign, Kicking the Stigma. Before the game, Irsay announced $1.4 million had been allotted to nearly two dozen nonprofit and charitable organizations, primarily in Indiana.

5 to represent NMI in Pacific Cup

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Northern Mariana Islands Cycling Federation will be sending cyclists to the inaugural Pacific Cup set in Guam from Dec. 9 to 11.

Team NMI will be bannered by NMI National Triathlon Team members Robyn Spaeth and Kathy Ruszala and veteran cyclists Willy Barbo, Cesar Fortaleza, and Nomer Mangalinao.

NMICF official Jay Diyco will accompany the five cyclists to the Oceania Cycling Confederation-organized event in Guam.

"I'm expecting the team to give a strong performance. I also hope that we win some medals even though I expect it to be a very strong competition," he said.

Asked what's his message to Spaeth, Ruszala, Barbo, Fortaleza, and Mangalinao, Diyco said, "Goodluck, enjoy, have fun, and do your best."

The NMICF official said the five were chosen based on their performances in the previous races.

"Participants must also be a citizen or a resident of the country they represent," he added.

Diyco said Team NMI's trip to Guam to participate in the Pacific wouldn't have been possible without the help of NMICF, Oceania Cycling Federation, Atkins Krolls, and Bridge Capital LLC.

"We want to thank NMI Cycling Federation headed by Vince Seman, Oceania Cycling Confederation, and AK Toyota and Bridge Capital LLC for sponsoring our team."

Barbo

Spaeth

Inaugural Oceania Cycling Confederation Pacific Cup set to boost cycling development in Pacific Islands

Expected to serve as a catalyst for the further growth of cycling across the Oceania region, the Pacific Cup consists of a time trial on Dec. 9 and a road race on Dec. 11.

The Pacific Cup is held concurrently with the Tour of Guam. The two races provide an opportunity for riders across Pacific nations to test themselves in a strong regional competition.

The CNMI will also be sending cyclists to the Tour of Guam, namely Diyco himself, Rusty Valino, Jojo Valencia, Nelson Pagaduan, and Florence Antonio.

The last Pacific island cycling event held was at the Pacific Games in Tahiti in 1995. The 27-year absence of an inter-island cycling competition has seen the Pacific Cup a highlight of the Oceania calendar, with strong entries from across the region.

Aside from the CNMI, competitors from six other nations—Guam, Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, New Caledonia, and Tahiti—will contest the men's events.

In a sign of the strength in women's cycling, riders from Guam, Fiji, Samoa, New Caledonia, Tahiti, and the CNMI will line up in the women's race.

The hosting of the Pacific Cup has been made possible thanks to significant Solidarity funding from the Union Cycliste Internationale, who are committed to supporting the development of cycling globally.

Oceania Cycling Confederation president Tony Mitchell said, "The Pacific Cup marks a significant milestone for the development of cycling in Oceania. For the first time ever, our Pacific nations will compete for the title of Pacific Cup Champion.

"This event brings together seven Pacific nations and sees both male and female athletes competing.

"On behalf of the Oceania Cycling Confederation, I wish the athletes competing all the best and I thank Guam for hosting the inaugural Pacific Cup. "

Oceania Cycling Confederation vice president Pacific and Guam Cycling Confederation president Eric Tydingco said, "We're excited to finally get this event going. As a grassroots cycling country, having the Pacific Cup nested within our annual one-day Tour of Guam race makes the most sense.

"Not only will we be crowning the first Pacific Cup champions, this race will also determine the Guam National Road Champions."

Initially planned to be held in December 2020, the Pacific Cup was postponed in both 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2022 edition will feature road time trial and road race, with future editions looking to expand to other cycling disciplines, beginning with mountain bike.

The introduction of the Pacific Cup is the first step in the OCC's ambitious athlete pathway strategy for Pacific cyclists. With the goal of creative competitiveness of Pacific riders at Oceania Championships and the return of cycling to the Pacific Games in 2027.

The 2023 Oceania Pacific calendar will be announced in early 2023.

CUKI

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Cuki Alvarez attributed his victory to experience as he didn't necessarily tore the track last weekend.

"It's always a good feeling when you win for sure, especially against fast competition! The Guam riders definitely brought the firepower and it was by no means an easy victory. I don't think I necessarily was the 'fastest rider' on the race track, but I definitely was the most consistent and I was able to finish the race with no crashes, mechanical failures, or fatigue," he said.

As almost always, fortune favored the elder Alvarez in the two-day race.

"In heat 2 on Sunday, Blaze Aiken took the hole shot and was well on his way to winning the race, but got a flat tire on lap 9. My son Shane and I, who placed 1 and 2 in heat 1 on Saturday, were about 4 seconds behind Blaze in heat 2, then once he got the flat tire, we were able to cruise on by and get the first and second place spots garnering us the Top 2 points and positions overall. Blaze got third place on Saturday. It was having good starts, finishing in the Top 3 positions, and not having any mechanical breakdowns that ultimately won me the race."

The MRA vice president also thanked Guam International Raceway Motorcycle and ATV Club for accepting their invitation to the 2022 Turkey Cross Rac.

"The last international competition race we held on Saipan was probably around 2007 or 2008. That was the last time MRA held a race at Cowtown, so as you can see, it was a long time coming. We have been planning this event since last year when we held the first Turkey Cross race, but the timing just wasn't right, especially since COVID-19 was still a big issue and traveling wasn't easy. So it was such a great feeling having our Guam motocross counterparts and familia finally make it over to compete," he said.

In all, CNMI riders won nine of the 14 divisions in the Turkey Cross Race. Results of the other divisions will be published in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune.*

TAN

From Page 20

Pascual, Joshua Waldo, Neil Gebhard, and Mita Michiteru.

The Hana Football Club clobbered Matansa, 7-3, for the championship.

Matansa's Houtom Cuohua opened up the game in the eighth minute but was immediately replied by Hee Kang's goal 10 minutes later. Matansa's Justin Weaver then put them up in the lead by one again, but Hana had one objective which was to score more goals and win the game.

One goal after the other came in the second half for Hana—two each from Timothy Tawanipy and Ace Lee, while Edwin Kim and Paul Jang made one each.

The third and last goal from Matansa was made by Dane Hodges.

In other results that day the U17 National team tamed Eleven Tiger, 3-2, and finally, Old B Bank defeated Shirley's, 2-0.

In last Friday's games, Old B Bank defeated Chang Bai Hu, 3-2, while the U17 National team trounced Kanoa Football Club, 3-0.

CONTRIBUTED

Women's home run winner Allana Sumang of Team Lady Eagles with BASA president Leo Bobai and board member Hector Efraim

SABLAN

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bel hit two.

A total of 16 batters from the men's division joined the derby, with Jerome Delos Santos, Marino Hiroichi, and J.J. Laniyo hitting two home runs each, while Darwin Masaharu, Taylor Germance, Dominic Hideo, and Tony Pangelinan hit one each. Chris Sablan, Henry Reyes, Clint Quitugua, John Diaz, Manny Villagomez, and Mike Techur came up with goose-eggs.

The women's champion brought home a Bud Light bat, second place won two cases of beer, and third place won one case of beer, while the men's champion won a Budweiser bat, second place won two cases of beer, and third place won one case of beer.

Results of the champions in the individual results will be posted in the next editions of *Saipan Tribune.*

Brazil advances at World Cup with 1-0 win over Switzerland

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Cuki leads CNMI domination in Turkey Cross

ANDO AGULTO
Cuki Alvarez leads in one of the heats in the Expert Open Class of the Marianas Racing Association's Turkey Cross Race last weekend at the Cowtown Race Track.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Cuki Alvarez led a parade of winners from the Marianas Racing Association against Guam International Raceway Motorcycle and ATV Club riders in last weekend's Turkey Cross Race at the Cowtown Race Track.

The 52-year-old boat captain fended off the challenge of his own son, Shane Alvarez, to top the Expert Open Class.

Cuki finished second to Shane in the first heat before returning with the vengeance in the second to win the division. Both riders came away with 47 points, but since Cuki won the second heat, he automatically snarred the diadem.

Guam's Johnny Aguon came in third in the Expert Open Class with 36 points, followed by New Zealand's Tim Wenden and Guam's Blaze Aiken with 34 points. Alverick Alvarez (31 points), Patrick Togawa (29 points), Corry Pangelinan (28 points), Melvin Cepeda (23 points), Ellery Cruz (21 points), and Charles Cepeda (10 points) make up the rest of the riders in the division.

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Tan Holdings FC, Hana FC are men's soccer champs

By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT

Tan Holdings Football Club is the Marianas Soccer League Fall 2022 Division A champions after ending the season undefeated after their game against Paire, 5-0, last Sunday at the Northern Mariana Islands Soccer Training Center in Koblerville, while Hana Football Club is the Division B champions.

Isiah Hossain led Tan Holdings with his completed three-goal hat-trick as Paire had yet to score. Teammates Brandon Tenorio and Ronnel Ocanada provided the two other goals for the team.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Tan Holdings Football Club is the Marianas Soccer League Fall 2022 Division A champions after ending the season undefeated with a 5-0 win over Paire last Sunday at the Northern Mariana Islands Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Besides Hossain, Tenorio, and Ocanada, the Tan Holdings team include Christopher Aninzo, Jerald Aquino, Leo Takahashi, Jireh Yobech, Taka Borja, Akira Kadokura, Martin Jambor, R.J. Narvaez, Jershwin Angeles, Reginald

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Sablan, Sumang win BASA home run derby

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Men's home run winner Cartfield Sablan of Team Peleliu with Belau Amateur Softball Association president Leo Bobai

By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT

If Major League Baseball sportscaster Chris "Boomer" Berman were to call the home run derby held last Sunday, he would've chanted "back, back, back, back!" four times—as Cartfield Sablan hit three home runs, while Allana Sumang hit one to claim the men's and women's division crowns in the home run derby of the 2022 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League held at the Dandan Softball Field.

Sablan of Team Peleliu initially smacked four big ones out of the park but was tied with Tokahao's Jeff Cruz, which led to a second round to break the tie.

At the end of the shootout, Sablan was the last man standing when the smoke cleared, as he hit three home runs to Cruz's two.

Third place went to Sufa's Audie Maratita who hit three home runs in the first round.

In the women's division derby, Sumang of the Lady Eagles, Kiana Aldan of Queens of Diamonds, and Glare Mabel of Lady Eagles all had three home runs in the first round which opened the second tie breaking round.

There, Sumang hit the first-place clinching home run, while Aldan and Mabel came out empty, which opened up the third round for second and third place. Aldan snatched the second place prize as she hit three home runs while Ma-

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